"DeMatteis hits all the right Spider-Man notes — selfless, brave, relatable — while adding intriguing new canon." – AIPT

SPIDER-MAN
SHADOW OF THE GREEN GOBLIN

DEMATTEIS
STA. MARIA
SOTOMAYOR

MARVEL

"Feels tailor-made for those missing the early days of Peter Parker, and it's an easy recommendation for Spidey fans in general." – ComicBook.com

RETURN TO THE CLASSIC ERA OF SPIDER-MAN — AND DISCOVER THE FIRST GOBLIN!

NORMAN OSBORN IS THE GREEN GOBLIN YOU KNOW. But he is not the original Goblin! Learn the shocking secrets of the Proto-Goblin and its dramatic connection to the Osborn family! What role does a young Peter Parker, who is only just beginning to understand his great power and responsibility, play in this unfolding of events? If Spidey can survive a run-in with his fearsome foe the Sandman, he has a terrifying encounter with the Proto-Goblin in store! J.M. DeMatteis ("Kraven's Last Hunt") delves into the mythos of classic Spider-Lore! Also includes the classic Flashback tale that introduced the Proto-Goblin!

COLLECTING ***SPIDER-MAN: SHADOW OF THE GREEN GOBLIN #1-4*** — BY J.M. DeMATTEIS, MICHAEL STA. MARIA AND CHRIS SOTOMAYOR — PLUS ***SPIDER-MAN (1990) #-1***.

T

MARVEL

SPIDER-MAN

SHADOW OF THE GREEN GOBLIN

HERO OR MENACE?
AFTER THE DEATH OF HIS UNCLE BEN, **PETER PARKER** MUST WALK A PATH OF POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY...
NORMAN OSBORN: SUPER-SCIENTIST?
ON THE PATH TO CREATE HIS **GOBLIN SERUM**, NORMAN MADE ONE HUGE MISTAKE...

SPIDER-MAN
SHADOW OF THE GREEN GOBLIN

THIS STORY CONTAINS DEPICTIONS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE.
FOR DOMESTIC ABUSE RESOURCES, CALL **THE NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE** AT **800-799-7233.**

© 2025 MARVEL. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental.

DANIEL KIRCHHOFFER
collection editor
LISA MONTALBANO
talent relations specialist
JENNIFER GRÜNWALD
director, production & special projects
JEFF YOUNGQUIST
vp, production & special projects
STACIE ZUCKER
book designer
ADAM DEL RE
manager & senior designer
JAY BOWEN
lead designer
DAVID GABRIEL
vp, print & digital publishing
TIM SMITH 3
sr. manager, digital
JASMINE ALVAREZ & RACHEL YOUNG
digital production
C.B. CEBULSKI
editor in chief

J.M. DEMATTEIS
writer
MICHAEL STA. MARIA
artist
CHRIS SOTOMAYOR
color artist
VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letterer
PAULO SIQUEIRA & RACHELLE ROSENBERG
cover art
DANNY KHAZEM
editor

SPIDER-MAN *created by* **STAN LEE & STEVE DITKO**

1
Paulo Rivera

YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD THE STORY, RIGHT? ABOUT THE BOY WHO LOST BOTH HIS PARENTS AT A TRAGICALLY YOUNG AGE...

RICHARD PARKER
BELOVED FATHER
MARY PARKER
BELOVED MOTH

...AND THE AUNT AND UNCLE WHO STEPPED IN TO RAISE HIM? PERHAPS THEY COULDN'T HEAL ALL HIS WOUNDS, WASH AWAY THE STAIN OF GRIEF...

...BUT THEY LOVED HIM WITH ALL THEIR HEARTS...

...AND HE LOVED THEM IN RETURN.

THE BOY WAS BRIGHT BUT AWKWARD: AN ODDBALL. AN OUTCAST. BUT THEN...

...ALONG CAME A RADIOACTIVE SPIDER...

...AND ***EVERYTHING CHANGED.***

HE GAINED EXTRAORDINARY ABILITIES--WITH AN EXTRAORDINARY EGO TO MATCH.

CAN YOU BLAME HIM?

THE MEDIA DUBBED HIM ***THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN.*** THE OUTCAST--HAD BECOME A ***STAR.***

BUT THE STAR DIMMED QUICKLY...

...WHEN ***TRAGEDY*** STRUCK AGAIN.

THE BOY'S BELOVED UNCLE WAS ***MURDERED...***

...BY A THUG HE COULD HAVE, ***SHOULD*** HAVE, STOPPED DAYS EARLIER.

AND NOW THAT FAMILIAR GRIEF...

...WAS JOINED BY A CRUSHING GUILT.

BEN PARKER
BELOVED FATHER

HE DIDN'T FEEL AMAZING. HE FELT ***ASHAMED.*** AND HE VOWED TO DO EVERYTHING HE COULD...

...TO MAKE SURE NO ONE *ELSE'S* UNCLE WOULD DIE ON HIS WATCH. TO USE HIS POWER CAREFULLY. RESPONSIBLY. TO BE A *HERO.*

BUT WHAT DOES A 15-YEAR-OLD KID KNOW ABOUT *HEROISM?* ONLY WHAT HE'S READ IN BOOKS, SEEN IN MOVIES, ON TV. IN OTHER WORDS...

...NOTHING.

The Amazing Spider-Man
SHADOW OF THE GOBLIN
CHAPTER ONE: FAMILY PLOT

MY NAME IS *PETER PARKER.* THE STORY I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU TOOK PLACE A LONG TIME AGO, LESS THAN A MONTH AFTER MY *UNCLE BEN'S* DEATH.

I'VE PIECED IT TOGETHER FROM MY OWN MEMORIES, FIRSTHAND ACCOUNTS FROM SOME OF THE OTHERS INVOLVED, NEWS REPORTS--AND, YES, UNSUBSTANTIATED RUMORS.

IT MAY NOT BE ONE HUNDRED PERCENT ACCURATE, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN...

...IT ISN'T *TRUE.*

...A *LOVELY* MEAL, DEAR.

WHILE I WAS SITTING ON A ROOFTOP BROODING (AS ONLY A TEENAGER CAN)...

...SOMETHING STRANGE WAS TAKING PLACE IN A CONDEMNED APARTMENT BUILDING ACROSS THE CITY. A VERY PECULIAR...

...*DINNER PARTY.*

YOU MUST HAVE BEEN COOKING ALL DAY, *OLIVIA* MY LOVE.

WHAT'S *THAT?* IT WAS YOUR *PLEASURE?*

SIGH WHATEVER DID I DO TO *DESERVE* SUCH A WIFE?

AND YOU, *HOPE?* HOW WAS *KINDERGARTEN* TODAY?

AN ART PROJECT? I'D *LOVE* TO SEE IT. BUT WAIT TILL WE'RE DONE EATING.

REALLY, *LUCAS.* DON'T TEASE YOUR SISTER LIKE THAT. IT ISN'T NICE.

I *KNOW* YOU WERE JUST KIDDING, BUT REMEMBER WHAT GRAMPA GABRIEL SAYS--

--"KINDNESS *ALWAYS* WINS THE DAY."

HIS NAME WAS *NELS VAN ADDER.* AND IF HE SEEMED UNTETHERED FROM REALITY, WELL...

...HE HAD *GOOD REASON.*

ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS FOLLOW YOUR *MOTHER'S* EXAMPLE.

NO KINDER SOUL HAS EVER LIVED. NO GENTLER HEART.

NO *TRUER LOVE.*

DAMN IT ALL.

VAN ADDER WORKED FOR OSBORN INDUSTRIES: A RESEARCH ASSISTANT ON *NORMAN OSBORN'S* BIOGENETICS TEAM. ALTHOUGH NELS WAS LESS OF AN ASSISTANT...

...AND MORE OF A *GUINEA PIG:*

BUT NORMAN'S DAYS AS THE *GREEN GOBLIN* WERE STILL MONTHS AWAY, SO YOU COULD SAY VAN ADDER WAS A KIND OF...

DAMN IT ALL TO HELL!

KRASH!

...*PROTO-GOBLIN.*

THE FIRST TO TEST A NEW STRENGTH-ENHANCING FORMULA OSBORN WAS DEVELOPING, THE FORERUNNER OF WHAT WOULD EVENTUALLY BECOME HIS GOBLIN FORMULA.

NORMAN, OF COURSE, CLAIMED HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT NELS' UNEXPECTED TRANSFORMATION INTO A MONSTROUS ABERRATION.

I...I CAN'T GO *ON* LIKE THIS!

I MISS MY *CHILDREN!*

THAT IT WAS ALL THE DOING OF HIS BUSINESS PARTNER, *MENDEL STROMM.*

MY WIFE!

KRAAK!

HE WAS *LYING,* OF COURSE. NORMAN WAS *ALWAYS* LYING.

ESPECIALLY TO HIMSELF.

THE POLICE BELIEVED THAT VAN ADDER DROWNED, BUT NO BODY WAS EVER FOUND.

AND HE *DID* DROWN IN A WAY. THE MAN HE WAS, THE ORDINARY LIFE HE TREASURED (MORE THAN HE'D EVER REALIZED)...

...HAD BEEN FOREVER *WASHED AWAY.*

FAMILY, HUH?

NOTHING BUT TROUBLE.

I GUESS YOU COULD SAY *MY* ORDINARY LIFE HAD BEEN WASHED AWAY TOO. REALITY WAS TURNED UPSIDE DOWN, PULLED INSIDE OUT...

...THE DAY I BECAME *SPIDER-MAN.*

...SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE WAFFLES, *PETER...?*

WHAT? NO, *AUNT MAY.* THEY'RE GREAT.

GUESS I'M JUST NOT ALL THAT *HUNGRY* THIS MORNING. I'M...*UH*... A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT TODAY'S CHEMISTRY TEST.

NORMAN WASN'T THE *ONLY* ONE WHO COULD LIE.

YOU? OH, *PLEASE*--YOU'LL GET A HUNDRED WITHOUT EVEN TRYING.

WE'D *BOTH* BEEN LYING EVER SINCE UNCLE BEN DIED.

PRETENDING WE WERE OKAY.

THAT OUR HEARTS WEREN'T SHATTERED.

AUNT MAY WOULD TALK ABOUT EVERYTHING *BUT* BEN. AND ME?

SO, WHAT ARE *YOU* UP TO TODAY?

I'D CRACK LAME JOKES...

ARM-WRESTLING CONTEST? SKYDIVING?

...AND SHE'D PRETEND TO BE AMUSED.

HEH! *SOMETHING* LIKE THAT.

WHY COULDN'T WE JUST TALK TO EACH OTHER? EXPRESS HOW WE *REALLY* FELT?

I THINK WE WERE TRYING TO *PROTECT* EACH OTHER. OR MAYBE...

WELL, *WHATEVER* YOU DO, BE HOME BY SIX!

NO MORE *CLUB-HOPPING* TILL THREE IN THE MORNING!

OVERDUE

MRS. MAY PARKER
20 INGRAM ST. FOREST HILLS,
QUEENS, N.Y.

...WE WERE TRYING TO PROTECT *OURSELVES.*

...I'M TELLIN' YA, *CLIFF CLIFFORD* IS THE BEST VENTRILOQUIST IN THE BUSINESS!

HE'S THE *PERFECT HOST* FOR YOUR NEW KIDDIE SHOW!

SO YOU CAN SEE HIS *LIPS* MOVE! SO *WHAT?* THE MAN'S A LAUGH RIOT!

MAXWELL SHIFFMAN

THE LITTLE TYKES'LL BE ROLLIN' ON THE *FLOOR!* YOUR RATINGS WILL--

tap tap tap

UH...LEMME CALL YA BACK, *DICKY.* SOMETHIN' JUST CAME UP--

--OR MAYBE *DOWN.* I'M NOT SURE.

WE WERE SWIMMING IN UNPAID BILLS. I NEEDED CASH. *FAST.*

GET OFF THE CEILING, KID! Y'KNOW THAT GIVES ME THE *CREEPS!*

AND MY AGENT, *MAXIE SHIFFMAN,* WAS THE GUY TO GET IT FOR ME.

OR NOT.

IF YOU'RE HERE FOR A GIG-- *FORGET* IT!

WHAT? *WHY?*

EVER SINCE THAT NUT *JAMESON* WENT ON THE *WARPATH* AGAINST YOU, THE WORK'S DRIED UP!

DOWN TO THE WIRE Yankees Win In 14th SEE SPORTS

CUT THE CHEESE French Say Tariffs S PAGE 9

DAILY BUGLE

Spider-Man HERO OR MENACE?

BANK ROBBERIES ON THE RISE: PAGE 14

MAXWELL SHIFFMAN

EVERYONE'S *AFRAID* OF YOU NOW! SORRY, KID--

--BUT YOU'RE *FINISHED* IN SHOWBIZ!

LOOK, MAXIE-- I'M *DESPERATE!* I'LL...I'LL DO *ANYTHING!*

GEEZ--EVEN THROUGH THAT *MESHUGGENEH* MASK, I CAN HEAR HOW *MISERABLE* YOU ARE!

SIGH I'LL FIND YOU *SOMETHING,* KID. I *PROMISE.*

SOME FOLKS VIEWED SHIFFMAN AS A JOKE: A TWO-BIT HUCKSTER IN A CHEAP TOUPEE AND A CHEAPER SUIT.

AND MAYBE HE WAS.

MAXIE--I COULD *KISS* YOU!

PLEASE DON'T!

BUT BENEATH THE BLUSTER...

...HE WAS *ALL HEART.*

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN *WEEKS,* I ALLOWED MYSELF TO FEEL HOPEFUL.

STOP HIM!

IT DIDN'T LAST LONG.

TH-THAT MAN! HE TOOK MY *PURSE!*

SOMEBODY, PLEASE-- *STOP* HIM!

SHE WAS AROUND AUNT MAY'S AGE. SCARED HALF OUT OF HER MIND.

AND RUNNING OFF WITH HER MONEY, HER CREDIT CARDS, PHOTOS OF HER GRANDKIDS?

A THUG.

REALLY? STEALING FROM OLD LADIES?

DOES IT GET ANY *LOWER* THAN THAT?

THEY'RE GONNA BE LOWERING *YOU* INTO THE *GROUND--*

--IF YA DON'T *BACK OFF!*

A THUG WITH A *GUN...*

...LIKE THE HEARTLESS PIECE OF GARBAGE...

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT I'M *CAPABLE* OF?

...WHO SHOT BEN PARKER.

SWAK!

WHAT I CAN DO TO YOU?

I HADN'T HEARD THE FALSE BRAVADO IN HIS VOICE OR SEEN THE TREMOR IN HIS HANDS.

ALL I SAW WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PAY SOMEONE, *ANYONE,* BACK FOR TAKING BEN *AWAY* FROM US.

THERE WAS JUST ONE PROBLEM:

A FEW DAYS EARLIER, I'D PUT A KID I CAUGHT ROBBING A GROCERY IN THE HOSPITAL WITH A *SINGLE PUNCH.*

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN FAMILY #3. --DANNY

I COULD HAVE *KILLED* HIM.

AND IT MADE ME REALIZE I HAD NO REAL *UNDERSTANDING* OF MY OWN STRENGTH.

NO WAY TO *CONTROL* IT.

AND THAT SCARED THE *HELL* OUT OF ME.

I FOUND OUT LATER THAT THE PURSE SNATCHER WAS AN ADDICT, DESPERATE FOR MONEY. HIS GUN WASN'T EVEN *LOADED.*

...YOU HEAR SOME KIDS TALK ABOUT THEIR PARENTS LIKE THEY'RE THE ENEMY. NOT *ME.*

WHAT IF I HADN'T HELD BACK? I WONDERED.

WOULD I HAVE PUT HIM IN THE HOSPITAL TOO? SMASHED IN HIS SKULL? SNAPPED HIS NECK? AM I A HERO...

...OR A MONSTER?

MY MOM? SHE'S MY *BEST FRIEND.*

BUT SHE'S SO *SICK*--AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'LL DO IF SHE--

IT WOULD BE YEARS BEFORE I MET *GWEN STACY* AND *HARRY OSBORN...*

YOU CAN'T *THINK* LIKE THAT, *GWEN.* SHE'S GONNA GET BETTER.

...TWO PEOPLE WHO WOULD HAVE AN INCALCULABLE IMPACT ON MY LIFE. IN WAYS BOTH WONDERFUL...

I *KNOW* SHE WILL.

...AND TERRIBLE.

AS MY DAD LIKES TO SAY: "FROM YOUR MOUTH TO *GOD'S EAR.*"

YOU...YOU NEVER TALK ABOUT *YOUR* MOM, HARRY.

NOT A LOT TO SAY. SHE DIED WHEN I WAS ONLY A YEAR OLD. I DON'T REALLY *REMEMBER* HER.

THEY'VE BOTH BEEN GONE A *LONG TIME* NOW...

BUT SOMETIMES... SOMETIMES I IMAGINE SHE'S *NOT* DEAD. THAT SHE'S *OUT THERE* SOMEWHERE AND--

I KNOW IT'S *STUPID,* BUT--

...BUT NOT A DAY GOES BY WHEN I DON'T THINK ABOUT THEM...

IT'S NOT STUPID, HARRY. IT'S *SWEET.*

I'M LUCKY TO HAVE YOU IN MY LIFE, GWEN STACY.

WE'RE *BOTH* LUCKY.

WITH ALL I'M GOING THROUGH RIGHT NOW, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D *DO* WITHOUT--

...AND *MISS* THEM.

WHAT'S *THIS...?*

DAD. I...I DIDN'T HEAR YOU *COME IN.*

GWEN-- HAVE YOU BEEN CRYING?

I THINK ABOUT *HIM* TOO. *NORMAN.* NOT EVERY DAY...

IT'S NOTHING. IT'S--

YOUR MOTHER. I *KNOW.*

I'VE BEEN CHECKING IN WITH *GEORGE* TO SEE HOW HE'S HOLDING UP.

...BUT *FAR TOO MUCH.*

AND I'LL TELL YOU WHAT I TOLD YOUR FATHER.

ANYTHING YOU NEED. *ANYTHING.*

I'M *HERE* FOR YOU.

I REMEMBER THE PAIN HE CAUSED. *THE MISERY.*

HOW HE MADE HARRY'S LIFE A LIVING HELL.

THANKS, DAD! YOU'RE THE *BEST!*

HOW HE *MURDERED* THE SAME YOUNG WOMAN HE PRETENDED TO COMFORT THAT DAY.

OVER THE YEARS, I'VE TRIED NOT TO HATE HIM. TO *FORGIVE* HIM.

I WASN'T *TALKING* TO YOU.

NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'VE GOT WORK TO DO--

HE WAS MENTALLY ILL, I TELL MYSELF. NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS ACTIONS.

--AND I DON'T WANT TO BE *DISTURBED.*

OVER TIME, I'VE *LET GO* OF THE HATE. BUT FORGIVENESS?

HARRY, I--

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT! NOW, *C'MON--*

C'MON *WHERE?*

YOU'LL SEE!

NOT IN *THIS* LIFETIME.

...EVERY YEAR, WE'VE TRIED TO HAVE SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR *DARRYL'S BIG DAY.*

BUT *THIS* YEAR, THERE WON'T BE A MAGICIAN OR A CLOWN. *UH-UH.* *THIS* YEAR, WE'VE GOT SOMETHING *REALLY* SPECIAL!

LOOK, KIDS, IT'S--

SPIDER-MAN! YAYYY!!!

MAXIE CAME THROUGH FOR ME, ALL RIGHT. BUT IT WASN'T *QUITE* WHAT I EXPECTED.

A HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE BUCKS-- FOR A *BIRTHDAY PARTY.*

YOU'RE NOT SPIDER-MAN! YOU'RE SOME PHONY IN A CHEESY *HALLOWEEN COSTUME!*

NOT SPIDER-MAN...? TELL ME, DARRYL--

BUT THE BIRTHDAY BOY IN QUESTION...

...WAS A REAL PAIN IN MY *WEB-SHOOTERS.*

--COULD A PHONY DO THIS?

SUCTION CUPS!

O-KAY--

--BUT CHECK *THIS* OUT! *JUGGLING BALLS--*

--THWIPPED INTO EXISTENCE BY MY VERY OWN SUPER-SECRET, ALL-PURPOSE, HEAVY DUTY--

SILLY STRING!

BOOZ G.

YEAH, WELL--

--HOW ABOUT *THIS?*

IT'S A *PROP!* PROB'LY MADE OUTTA *CARDBOARD!* MAN--

--YOU REALLY *SUCK* AT THIS!

THAT'S IT!

I! *AM! DONE!*

IT'S BAD ENOUGH BEING HARANGUED AND HUMILIATED EVERY DAY BY THAT BLOWHARD *JONAH JAMESON--*

--BUT I *REFUSE* TO BE DEMEANED, DEBASED, AND DEGRADED BY A *10-YEAR-OLD!*

SPIDER-MAN... PLEASE! *DON'T GO!*

GIVE ME ONE GOOD REASON WHY I *SHOULDN'T!*

MY DARRYL, HE... HE'S A *GOOD BOY.*

BUT HIS DAD...HIS DAD *DIED,* SUDDENLY, JUST A COUPLE OF *MONTHS* AGO. AND EVER SINCE THEN--

WELL, DARRYL'S EITHER BEEN *WITHDRAWN* OR *ACTING OUT* AND--

AND YOU THOUGHT A VISIT FROM YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD SPIDER-MAN MIGHT HELP SNAP HIM *OUT* OF IT.

AND WHAT DO I DO? THROW A TANTRUM WORSE THAN *HIS!*

I FELT LIKE AN *IDIOT.* PROBABLY BECAUSE I *WAS* ONE.

AND I KNEW I HAD TO FIND A WAY...

...TO MAKE AMENDS.

AFTER ALL, WE WERE PRETTY MUCH THE SAME, WEREN'T WE? JUST A COUPLE OF CONFUSED KIDS TRYING TO COPE WITH TERRIBLE LOSS.

WOW.

WOW!

I STILL KEEP IN TOUCH WITH DARRYL. SEND A BIRTHDAY CARD EVERY YEAR.

HE'S A DOCTOR NOW-- CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? WORKS WITH AN ORGANIZATION THAT PROVIDES HUMANITARIAN MEDICAL AID ALL AROUND THE WORLD. WHICH, I GUESS...

...MAKES HIM THE *REAL* SUPER HERO.

...BUT YOU'VE *GOT* TO TAKE THE MONEY!

HONESTLY, *MRS. ANDERSON*-- I SHOULD BE PAYING *YOU.*

THAT SWING AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD WITH DARRYL DID MORE FOR *ME* THAN IT DID FOR *HIM!*

YOU PUT THAT MONEY TO GOOD USE!

GOD BLESS YOU, SPIDER-MAN!

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING: YOU REALLY COULDN'T AFFORD TO GIVE THAT MONEY BACK.

HEY, I WAS YOUNG. MORE THAN A LITTLE NAIVE. BUT THE TRUTH IS...

...I'D DO THE SAME THING *TODAY.*

...SO, *WHOSE* PARTY IS THIS, HARRY?

SOME OF THE GUYS I WENT TO *PRIVATE SCHOOL* WITH.

BUT YOU *HATED* PRIVATE SCHOOL. YOU *BEGGED* YOUR DAD TO TAKE YOU OUT.

THAT WAS A *LONG TIME* AGO.

BUT--

LOOK, GWEN-- WE BOTH NEED TO LET OFF A LITTLE STEAM, SO LET'S JUST RELAX AND ENJOY OURSELVES, *OKAY?*

OKAY. BUT IF THINGS GET WEIRD, WE'RE GETTING--

HAROLD! WHAT ROCK HAVE *YOU* BEEN HIDING UNDER?

"HAROLD"?

UH...HI, RUPERT.

"RUPERT"?

WAIT TILL THE OLD GANG FINDS OUT YOU'RE HERE!

HARRY? WHERE ARE YOU--?

GWEN WAS RIGHT, OF COURSE. PRIVATE SCHOOL HAD BEEN A *NIGHTMARE* FOR HARRY:

DAY AFTER DAY, THE POOR GUY WAS BULLIED, BADGERED, AND BEATEN.

WHICH, COME TO THINK OF IT, DESCRIBES A GOOD PERCENTAGE OF MY *OWN* EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE.

WELL, WELL, *WELL--!*

WHO IS *THIS* GLORIOUS CREATURE?

NOBODY.

OH, I THINK YOU'RE *SOMEBODY!* A *BLONDE GODDESS,* DESCENDED FROM OLYMPIAN HEIGHTS!

LET ME STOP YOU RIGHT THERE.

I'M *NOT INTERESTED.*

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW ME YET.

STERLING BOCK--OF THE FAMOUS *BOCK LIQUOR FORTUNE.*

I DON'T *DRINK.*

WHEN I FIRST MET GWEN, SHE SEEMED UPTIGHT. A LITTLE TOO PRIM, PROPER, AND PERFECT.

NOT IMPRESSED?

IN THE *LEAST.*

WHY DON'T I BELIEVE YOU?

BECAUSE YOU'RE *DENSE?*

BUT I LEARNED PRETTY SOON THAT, BENEATH THE WELL-MANICURED EXTERIOR...

NO, NO, NO, GODDESS-- YOU CAN'T *ABANDON* ME!

SORRY. LATE FOR A LUNCH DATE WITH *ZEUS* AND *HERA.*

C'MON, GIVE ME A *CHANCE!* WE'LL HEAD UP TO THE GARDEN ON THE ROOF AND--

LET GO OF ME. *NOW.*

AND IF I DON'T?

MY FATHER'S A *POLICEMAN,* STERLING.

IS THAT SUPPOSED TO *FRIGHTEN* ME?

NO. I'M JUST GIVING YOU *FAIR WARNING.*

Y'SEE, DAD STARTED GIVING ME *SELF-DEFENSE* LESSONS AS SOON AS I COULD *WALK.*

THUK

HEY!

KAPUM

KK!

AND HE'S A *FANTASTIC* TEACHER.

...SHE WAS *TOUGH AS NAILS.*

HEY--NICE *WORK.*

CLAP

CLAP

CLAP

CLAP

CLAP

CLAP

I'VE BEEN *WAITING* FOR SOMEONE TO PUT THAT ARROGANT, EGOTISTICAL JACKASS IN HIS PLACE.

GWEN...YOU *ALL RIGHT?*

FINE.

YOU WANNA HEAD OUT?

NAH. THIS MIGHT JUST TURN OUT TO BE FUN *AFTER* ALL.

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT MAY HAVE BEEN *SOMEONE'S* DEFINITION OF FUN...

KRAAASHH!

HARRY OSBORN!

I'VE COME FOR YOU!

...BUT NOT GWEN'S.

AND *CERTAINLY* NOT HARRY'S.

ME?

D-D-DID HE SAY HE'S HERE FOR *ME?!*

I DON'T KNOW WHO...*WHAT*... THAT IS--BUT WE HAVE TO GET *OUT* OF HERE BEFORE--

GOTCHA!

HARRY!

I SAID BEFORE THAT I DIDN'T MEET GWEN OR HARRY TILL *COLLEGE.* AND THAT'S TRUE...

...FOR *PETER PARKER.*

I'D BEEN SWINGING AROUND THE CITY AIMLESSLY, TRYING TO AVOID GOING HOME.

I COULDN'T BEAR THE THOUGHT OF AUNT MAY AND I STARING AT EACH OTHER, WITH STRAINED SMILES PLASTERED ACROSS OUR FACES.

SO IT WAS ACTUALLY A RELIEF...

...WHEN MY *SPIDER-SENSE* STARTED BUZZING LIKE AN ELECTRIC SAW.

AND, FROM THE INTENSITY OF THE BUZZ, IT WAS PRETTY CLEAR THAT WHATEVER SET IT OFF...

...WAS *NEARBY.*

THEN I SAW THAT--WELL, I DIDN'T KNOW *WHAT* IT WAS-- CLAMBERING DOWN THE SIDE OF A BUILDING.

IT LOOKED LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF THE BLACK-AND-WHITE *MONSTER MOVIES* UNCLE BEN LOVED SO MUCH. AND I'M NOT ASHAMED TO ADMIT...

...THAT I WAS *TERRIFIED.*

...WHY ARE YOU *DOING* THIS? WHAT DO YOU *WANT* WITH ME?

I WANT YOU TO *SHUT UP,* OSBORN--

--BEFORE I RIP YOUR *TONGUE* RIGHT OUT OF YOUR MOUTH!

MY FIRST INSTINCT WAS TO PUT AS MUCH DISTANCE BETWEEN ME AND THAT BEASTIE AS POSSIBLE.

BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT HEROES *DO,* IS IT?

WELL, *YOU* CERTAINLY GOT UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE CRYPT THIS MORNING--

SNAP!

--*DIDN'T* YOU, FRANKENSTEIN?

I KNOW, I KNOW: IT WAS *DRACULA* WHO SLEPT IN A CRYPT, NOT *FRANKENSTEIN...*

HELP!

...BUT I WAS STILL NEW TO THE WHOLE "QUIPPING WHILE FIGHTING FOR MY LIFE" BUSINESS...

...SO *FORGIVE* ME IF THE JOKE DIDN'T LAND.

OF COURSE, A COMEDIC MISFIRE IS *ONE* THING, ACCIDENTALLY KNOCKING THE PERSON YOU'RE TRYING TO RESCUE OFF A ROOF...

THWIP

DON'T WORRY, PAL-- *I'VE* GOT YOU!

...IS QUITE *ANOTHER.*

WAIT! YOU'RE *SPIDER-MAN!* THE... THE *MASKED MENACE!*

NO MYSTERY WHAT NEWSPAPER *YOU* SUBSCRIBE TO!

KEEP AWAY FROM ME!

IN CASE YOU DIDN'T NOTICE-- I JUST *SAVED* YOU!

THAT'S WHAT YOU'D LIKE ME TO *BELIEVE!* BUT YOU AND THAT *THING--*

--YOU'RE PROBABLY IN THIS *TOGETHER!*

WHOMP!

MAYBE YOU SHOULD TELL *HIM* THAT!

THE GOBLIN HIT ME HARD.

IT *REALLY* HURT.

AND CONSIDERING ALL THE RAW EMOTION-- THE UNEXPRESSED GRIEF AND RAGE-- I WAS SITTING ON...

...I COULDN'T WAIT...

...TO HIT HIM *BACK.*

SWAM!

KRAAK!

OH NO.

OH NO!

I'D DONE IT AGAIN.

LASHED OUT WITHOUT THINKING...

...UNABLE TO CONTAIN, CONTROL, THE INCREDIBLE STRENGTH THAT WAS STILL *SO NEW* TO ME.

WHAT IF I'D BROKEN HIS BACK AND *PARALYZED* HIM? WHAT IF HE WAS--?

HEY...HEY, ARE YOU *OKAY?*

ME? I HAVEN'T BEEN "OKAY"--

--IN A *VERY* LONG TIME!

HE CAME AT ME SUDDENLY, VICIOUSLY...

...AND I JUST *STOOD* THERE...

...AND LET HIM *DO* IT...

SLAM!

...SO AFRAID THAT IF I FOUGHT BACK, LET LOOSE...

THWIP!!

ROKK!

...I'D KILL HIM.

GWEN... LOOK! SPIDER-MAN WAS JUST TRYING TO HELP!

WE'VE GOT TO CALL THE POLICE--

--BEFORE THAT THING TEARS HIM APART!

STOMP!

I THINK I MENTIONED BEFORE...

SORRY, OSBORN! YOU'RE PRECIOUS GOODS--

--AND I CAN'T LET YOU GET AWAY!

...THAT, WHEN I WAS A KID, I WAS ALWAYS GETTING PICKED ON. PUSHED AROUND.

I USED TO FANTASIZE ABOUT STANDING UP TO THE BULLIES.

HEY, GRUESOME!

THWAP

KNOCKING THE CRUELTY AND ARROGANCE RIGHT OUT OF THEM.

BUT FANTASY AND REALITY...

...ARE TWO VERY DIFFERENT THINGS.

YOU DIDN'T FORGET ABOUT ME, DID YOU?

WHEN YOU ACTUALLY HIT SOMEONE, HURT SOMEONE, IT'S NOT EXHILARATING:

IT'S *HORRIFYING.*

WE DON'T HAVE TO *DO* THIS. WALK AWAY.

LET THE KID *GO.*

KEEP HIM AWAY FROM HARRY.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT--I'D *LOVE TO!*

AND IF THAT MEANT HE KICKED THE *CRAP* OUT OF ME?

BUT I'VE LOST *TOO MUCH!* AND THIS IS THE *ONLY* WAY--

STILL, I HAD TO *DISTRACT* THE GOBLIN.

--TO GET IT BACK!

STONK!

PONK!

BOK!

MARRIED

SO *BE* IT.

EEEEOOOOEEEOOOO

DAMN!

NYPD POLICE

NYPD

THE ARRIVAL OF THE POLICE...

...SENT THE GOBLIN SCUTTLING OFF...

...AND PROBABLY SPARED ME SOME *BROKEN BONES.*

SPIDER-MAN WAS HERE TOO--

--AND HE'S IN THAT *STORE* ACROSS THE STREET!

BUT BY THE TIME THEY CAME LOOKING FOR ME...

...I'D DONE SOME SCUTTLING OF MY *OWN.*

VIOLENCE. IT'S BEEN PART AND PARCEL OF MY LIFE SINCE THAT SPIDER SANK ITS FANGS INTO ME. AND THE TRUTH IS...

...I'VE ALWAYS *HATED* IT.

I HIT THE BAD GUY, HE HITS *ME.* AND WE'RE ALWAYS A PUNCH AWAY FROM ONE OF US *DYING.*

BUT YOU KNOW WHAT I *HAVEN'T* HATED? YOU KNOW WHY I KEPT PUTTING ON THE MASK, SWINGING ON WEBS, FOR ALL THOSE YEARS?

BECAUSE I COULD *HELP* PEOPLE. BECAUSE I COULD MAKE A *DIFFERENCE* IN THEIR LIVES.

HARRY!

ARE THERE MORE *CONSTRUCTIVE* WAYS TO BE A FORCE FOR GOOD IN THE WORLD? SURE. AND, AS I'VE GROWN OLDER, I'VE *EMBRACED* THEM.

BUT WHEN I LOOK BACK ON THAT SKINNY, INSECURE KID FROM QUEENS AND ALL HE ACCOMPLISHED...

...I'M *PROUD* OF HIM.

ARE YOU HURT?

I... I'M *FINE,* DAD.

THANK *GOD.*

I...I LOST YOUR *MOTHER.* I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO--IF I LOST *YOU TOO.*

BUT HOW COULD YOU *LET THIS HAPPEN?*

LET IT HAPPEN?

DAD-- HE WAS SOME KIND OF *MONSTER!* HE--

AND YOU DIDN'T PUT UP A *FIGHT?*

DAMN IT, HARRY--YOU'RE AN *OSBORN!*

TIME TO GROW A SPINE!

ONE THING I'VE LEARNED OVER THE YEARS IS THAT LOVE FINDS FERTILE SOIL IN THE MOST *UNEXPECTED* PLACES--AND I BELIEVE THAT NORMAN *GENUINELY LOVED* HIS SON.

BUT I THINK HE WAS *ASHAMED* OF THAT LOVE. HE VIEWED IT AS A *WEAKNESS.* AND WEAKNESS (REAL OR IMAGINED, IN OTHERS AND IN HIMSELF)...

...IS WHAT NORMAN OSBORN LOATHED *MOST* IN ALL THE WORLD.

I WAS *LUCKY.* AUNT MAY AND UNCLE BEN *ALWAYS* LET ME KNOW HOW MUCH THEY LOVED ME. I NEVER DOUBTED IT FOR AN INSTANT.

WE WERE A WORKING-CLASS FAMILY. WE NEVER HAD MUCH MONEY. BUT WITH A LOVE LIKE *THAT...*

...WE WERE RICHER THAN *KINGS.*

OH...*MAN.* I ACHE *ALL OVER.*

NORMAN WAS WRONG: LOVE DOESN'T MAKE US WEAK.

BUT IT DOES MAKE US *VULNERABLE.*

KNOCK KNOCK

PETER...?

*Uh...*BE RIGHT *THERE,* AUNT MAY!

AND IF WE'RE NOT CAREFUL, IF WE DON'T *NURTURE* IT, *RESPECT* IT...

YOU WERE OUT SO *LATE,* PETER. I WAS WORRIED. I COULDN'T SLEEP.

THEN I HEARD YOU *IN* HERE, AND--

PETER?

DEAR GOD--

--WHAT *HAPPENED* TO YOU?

IT'S *NOTHING,* AUNT MAY. I GOT INTO A LITTLE FIGHT. *NO BIG DEAL.*

"NO BIG DEAL"?

"NO BIG DEAL"?!

...WE MIGHT FIND OURSELVES *HURTING* THE PEOPLE WE LOVE *MOST...*

...AND HURTING *OURSELVES...*

MY *HUSBAND IS DEAD--*

--MY NEPHEW COMES HOME BEATEN AND BRUISED LIKE SOME...SOME *HOODLUM--*

--AND YOU HAVE THE *AUDACITY* TO TELL ME IT'S *"NO BIG DEAL"?!*

PETER BENJAMIN PARKER-- HOW COULD YOU BE SO *THOUGHTLESS?* SO *IRRESPONSIBLE?*

SO UNBELIEVABLY *CRUEL?!*

SLAM!

...*EVEN MORE.*

...YOU FAILED, NELS.

MISERABLY.

AND I WON'T HONOR THE TERMS OF OUR AGREEMENT UNTIL YOU'VE *COMPLETED* THE TASK I'VE ASSIGNED YOU.

PLEASE... *PLEASE!* I CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS!

I HAVE TO GET BACK TO MY *FAMILY!*

THEN *DO YOUR DAMN JOB.*

I WILL! I SWEAR!

IT WON'T BE EASY. NORMAN WILL INCREASE HIS *SECURITY* AND--

THAT WON'T *STOP* ME! *NOTHING* WILL STOP ME THIS TIME!

IT HAD BETTER *NOT,* NELS.

NOW GET BACK OUT THERE AND BRING ME *HARRY OSBORN.*

BRING ME--

"--MY SON."

2

MY NAME IS PETER PARKER...

A VACUUM CLEANER--CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

DANNY'S PLACE

...AND I WANT TO TELL YOU A STORY.

IT'S EMBARRASSING!

UH-HUH.

I MEAN, IT'S BAD ENOUGH I'M SOME KINDA FREAK--

--BUT AT LEAST I'M A POWERFUL ONE, RIGHT?

WHATEVER YOU SAY.

AN' THEN THAT MASKED IDIOT STOPS ME WITH A STINKIN' VACUUM CLEANER-- AN' I GET SENT BACK T' JAIL!

HEY...ARE YOU EVEN LISTENIN' T' ME?

YEAH, SURE. YOU SELL VACUUM CLEANERS, AN' THINGS AIN'T GOIN' YOUR WAY.

LIFE'S TOUGH ALL OVER, BUDDY. THAT'S JUST THE WAY IT--

--GOES.

The Amazing Spider-Man

SHADOW OF THE GREEN GOBLIN

CHAPTER TWO: DEMON OF SAND

YOU WEREN'T LISTENING!

FLASHBACK

THE WALKING MOUND OF BEACH WAS NAMED *FLINT MARKO*, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS *THE SANDMAN*--AND HIS LIFE *HAD* BEEN PRETTY TOUGH: ONE BAD BREAK AFTER ANOTHER.

NO EXCUSE FOR WRECKING THAT EAST SIDE DIVE AND SENDING THE BARTENDER TO THE HOSPITAL WITH *CRACKED RIBS* AND A *SHATTERED KNEECAP*...

...BUT, AS SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN PUSHED TO THE EDGE (AND OVER IT) ON MULTIPLE OCCASIONS...

...I CAN *RELATE* TO HIS ANGER AND FRUSTRATION.

BUT, FOR ALL THE YEARS THAT HAVE GONE BY SINCE THESE EVENTS OCCURRED, I CAN'T MUSTER THE SAME EMPATHY, THE SAME COMPASSION...

...FOR *NORMAN OSBORN.*

REPTILIAN

I'D *LIKE* TO BELIEVE NORMAN WAS DEVASTATED AFTER *NELS VAN ADDER,* THE SO-CALLED *PROTO-GOBLIN,* TRIED TO KIDNAP *HARRY.*

THAT THE VERY THOUGHT OF LOSING HIS ONLY SON WAS UNBEARABLE.

I'D LIKE TO BELIEVE HE GENUINELY *LOVED* HARRY.

BUT NORMAN *WAS* A MASTER MANIPULATOR, A PATHOLOGICAL LIAR--AND EVEN IF HE WAS CAPABLE OF FEELING LOVE, IT WAS BURIED DEEP IN A SOUL *POISONED* BY TRAUMA. LOCKED AWAY...

...IN THE DARKEST CORNERS OF A *DEMENTED MIND.*

LOVE? FOR NORMAN, IT WAS JUST ANOTHER MEANS TO AN END.

ANOTHER *WEAPON* IN HIS HANDS.

AM I DOING NORMAN A DISSERVICE? HAS THE FACT THAT HE WAS *SPIDER-MAN'S* ENEMY FOR SO LONG...

...THAT, AS THE *GREEN GOBLIN,* HE LEFT A TRAIL OF *BRUTALITY* AND *SORROW* IN HIS BLOODY WAKE...

...*BLINDED* ME TO HIS HUMANITY?

PERHAPS. AND YOU KNOW WHAT?

I DON'T CARE.

THIS SELF-PITY IS... *UNATTRACTIVE,* NELS.

LEAVE ME ALONE.

I'LL LEAVE YOU ALONE WHEN YOU'VE DONE WHAT YOU *PROMISED.*

BRING ME MY *SON.* BRING ME *HARRY OSBORN.*

EMILY OSBORN WAS HARRY'S MOTHER. NORMAN'S LATE, LAMENTED WIFE.

YES, I SAID *"LATE"*-- BECAUSE, BACK THEN, EVERYONE BELIEVED EMILY WAS *DEAD.*

AND THAT WAS JUST THE WAY SHE *WANTED* IT.

I...I HAVE TO GET BACK TO MY WIFE AND KIDS. BUT HOW *CAN* I--

--WHEN I'M THIS UNSPEAKABLE... *THING?*

JUST DO WHAT I ASK.

BRING HARRY TO ME. HELP ME GET MY REVENGE...*OUR* REVENGE... ON NORMAN--

--AND I'LL PROVIDE THE *CURE.*

YOU'LL BE A *MAN* AGAIN, NELS. YOU'LL BE *FREE.*

BUT... HOW DO I KNOW THAT--?

THAT I'M NOT *LYING?* THAT I'M NOT *USING* YOU?

DON'T CONFUSE ME WITH MY HUSBAND. EMILY OSBORN--

--IS A WOMAN OF HER *WORD.*

YOU'D *BETTER* BE.

I'M NOT SOME *PUPPET* YOU CAN DANCE AROUND ON YOUR STRINGS.

I COULD KILL YOU *HERE AND NOW!* SNAP THAT PRETTY NECK AND--

AND BE TRAPPED IN THAT HIDEOUS FORM *FOREVER?* I THINK NOT. WE *NEED* EACH OTHER, NELS, AND--

...NO...

EVERY MUSCLE IN HIS BODY, *SPASMING.* EVERY CELL, *ON FIRE.* A GEYSER OF *BILE* ROSE IN HIS THROAT.

AND HE *SCREAMED.*

NOOO!

AND WITH EACH APPALLING METAMORPHOSIS...

NORMAN'S UNSTABLE FORMULA WAS *CHANGING* HIM AGAIN.

...NELS VAN ADDER TOOK ONE STEP CLOSER...

...TO *DEATH.*

ONE PERSON *CHEATING* THE REAPER, ANOTHER TUMBLING INTO HIS *ARMS.*

BUT IN THE END, THE SHADOW OF OUR OWN EXTINCTION...

...FALLS ACROSS *EVERY* LIFE.

A LITTLE GRIM, I KNOW. OKAY, *MORE* THAN A LITTLE.

BUT WHEN I THINK BACK ON THOSE WEEKS JUST AFTER *UNCLE BEN'S MURDER,* SOMETIMES THAT SHADOW...

...IS *ALL I SEE.*

AUNT MAY AND I HAD BEEN *PRETENDING:* THAT WE WERE STRONG. THAT OUR HEARTS WEREN'T BREAKING.

AND I'D MADE IT ALL WORSE BY COMING HOME *BRUISED AND BEATEN* AFTER MY FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH VAN ADDER.

I'D FRIGHTENED HER. HURT HER. WORSE: I'D UNLEASHED A *RAW ANGER...*

...I'D NEVER *SEEN* BEFORE.

I HAD TO TALK TO MAY. APOLOGIZE. AND I KNEW...

...SHE FELT THE SAME WAY.

WE NEEDED EACH OTHER *MORE THAN EVER.* SO WHY...

...DID WE *TURN AWAY?* WHAT WERE WE *AFRAID* OF?

--FIRST THING WE'LL DO WHEN YOU'RE OUT OF HERE IS TAKE A FEW DAYS...ALL *THREE* OF US...AND GO OUT TO THE *CAPE.*

OUR *GRIEF.*

AFRAID THAT ALL THOSE FEELINGS WE'D BEEN TRYING *SO HARD* TO KEEP IN CHECK WOULD RISE UP LIKE A *TSUNAMI...*

...AND *WASH US AWAY.*

I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU *LOVE* IT OUT THERE, MOM.

HELEN STACY HAD *PANCREATIC CANCER*--AND HER PROGNOSIS WAS BLEAK.

LIVE

21 NEWS

PROTO GOBLIN ON THE LOOSE

BUT *GWEN* REFUSED TO SEE IT.

WE CAN WALK ON THE BEACH. SWIM. READ BOOKS. PLAY BOARD GAMES.

SOUNDS WONDERFUL, DARLING. SOUNDS LIKE--

--HEAVEN.

SHE TOLD ME, YEARS LATER, THAT SHE SAW HER *GRIEF* AS AN *ENEMY.* THAT SHE'D DECIDED TO *WILL* IT AWAY. AND WILL HER *MOTHER* TO *HEAL.* "I GUESS," SHE SAID, "YOU'D CALL IT MAGICAL THINKING.

"BUT, HEY, I WAS *15.* AND *GOD KNOWS* WE COULD *USE* A LITTLE MAGIC IN THIS WORLD."

HER FATHER WAS A POLICE CAPTAIN. A REALIST.

BUT LISTENING TO HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER PLAN FOR THE FUTURE GAVE *GEORGE STACY* SOME SMALL COMFORT...

...EVEN THOUGH HE KNEW THAT FUTURE...

...WOULD NEVER COME.

...WH-WHAT DO YOU WANT?!

I'LL GET BACK TO GWEN LATER. BUT, FOR NOW, LET'S HEAD OUT TO BROOKLYN...

MSM22

...AND CHECK BACK IN ON THE SANDMAN.

WHAT DO I WANT? THIS IS A BANK, ISN'T IT?

I WANT MONEY! ENOUGH TO GET ME OUT OF THIS HELLHOLE OF A CITY--

--AND FAR AWAY FROM COPS AND PRISONS AND--

ME...?

ACTUALLY--

--I WAS HOPING YOU'D COME ALONG!

AW...YOU MISSED ME! I'M TOUCHED!

WHAT CAN I SAY?

I'M A REAL SWEETHEART!

KAAAASHHH

I WAS STILL NURSING MY WOUNDS FROM VAN ADDER'S BEATDOWN. I'D SWORN TO AUNT MAY THAT I WOULDN'T BE GETTING IN ANY MORE FIGHTS.

OUCH.

I WAS TERRIFIED MY SPIDER-STRENGTH MIGHT SEND SOMEBODY ELSE TO THE HOSPITAL (I'D DONE IT ONCE ALREADY).

SO WHY WAS I GOING *OUT OF MY WAY* TO TAKE ON A SUPER-POWERED BRUISER LIKE MARKO?

LAST TIME WE MET UP, WEBS, I WAS STILL *NEW* T' THIS GAME.

HADN'T REALLY FIGURED OUT HOW THIS SAND BUSINESS *WORKED.* ALL THE CRAZY THINGS I'M *CAPABLE* OF.

I'D LIKE TO SAY IT WAS A HEROIC DESIRE TO SEE *JUSTICE* DONE.

TO PUT AN *ESCAPED CRIMINAL* BACK BEHIND BARS. BUT THE TRUTH IS...

...BEING *SPIDER-MAN* WAS AN *ESCAPE:*

BUT *NOW?* WELL, LET'S JUST SAY--

WHOOM!

--NO FREAKIN' VACUUM CLEANER'S GONNA STOP ME THIS TIME!

FROM HIGH-SCHOOL BULLIES...FROM THE SHAME I FELT FOR THE WAY I'D TREATED AUNT MAY...AND, MAYBE MOST OF ALL...

TKWOOSH

...FROM THE *CRUSHING GUILT* OVER UNCLE BEN'S DEATH.

I DIDN'T TAKE ON SOME *NEW PERSONA* WHEN I BECAME SPIDEY. I WAS STILL *PETER PARKER* UNDER THAT MASK.

HA! WENT RIGHT *THROUGH* ME--AND I DIDN'T FEEL A *THING!*

NOTHING CAN HURT ME NOW!

KLONK!

BUT THIS PETER WAS MORE DYNAMIC, MORE CONFIDENT, AND A *LOT* LESS AWKWARD...

NOTHING CAN *HURT* YOU?

...THAN THE *PIMPLY TEENAGER* I HAD TO GAWK AT IN THE MIRROR EVERY MORNING.

NOTHING CAN *HURT* YOU?!

SKWAKK!

THEN LET'S HAVE SOME *FUN!*

I'D BEEN LIVING IN FEAR OF MY OWN STRENGTH, MY OWN POWER. CHECKING MYSELF. HOLDING BACK.

NOT *BAD*, INSECT!

BUT NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO STOP THE SANDMAN!

100M

BUT, WITHOUT REALIZING IT...

...MARKO HAD GIVEN ME PERMISSION TO *SHAKE OFF* MY SELF-IMPOSED RESTRAINTS...

...AND *LET LOOSE*...

...IN A WAY I NEVER *HAD* BEFORE.

KOOOSH!

I HIT HIM SO FAST, SO HARD, SO *UNRELENTINGLY*...

SWOP!

...THAT IT WAS ALL MARKO COULD DO TO HOLD HIMSELF *TOGETHER*...

...LET *ALONE* MOUNT A DECENT DEFENSE.

PFUTT!

AND HE WAS *SCARED:* OF BEING *HUMILIATED* AGAIN.

OF GOING BACK TO JAIL.

POKT!

AND THAT FEAR *PUSHED* HIM...

...TO THE LIMITS OF HIS *OWN* POWERS...

WHOOOOOSHHH

...AND BEYOND.

...CAN I WATCH A *MUPPET SHOW* AFTER DINNER, *MOMMY?*

JUST ONE EPISODE, *HOPE*... THEN YOUR BROTHER WILL READ YOU A STORY--

--AND YOU'LL GO *STRAIGHT TO BED.*

AND HOW FAR HAD *NELS VAN ADDER* BEEN PUSHED?

MAYBE I'LL READ TO YOU, SQUIRT...OR MAYBE I'LL JUST *TICKLE* YOU FOR HALF AN HOUR STRAIGHT.

HEE-HEE-HEE. CUT IT OUT, *LUCAS!*

IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, WHY ARE YOU *LAUGHING?*

FAR ENOUGH TO RISK GOING HOME TO LOOK IN ON HIS FAMILY?

ON THE WIFE AND CHILDREN HE'D BEEN FORCED TO ABANDON, WITHOUT EXPLANATION, AFTER THE *PROTO-GOBLIN* UPENDED HIS LIFE?

I CAN'T SWEAR THAT'S WHAT HE DID...

...BUT IT'S WHAT I WOULD HAVE DONE IN HIS SHOES.

AND MY HEART WOULD HAVE *BROKEN*-- KNOWING I COULDN'T WALK THROUGH THAT FRONT DOOR, TAKE THEM IN MY ARMS...

...AND TELL THEM HOW MUCH I *LOVED* THEM. *MISSED* THEM.

NEEDED THEM.

BUT MAYBE IT *NEVER HAPPENED.* MAYBE GOING BACK WOULD HAVE BEEN...

...TOO MUCH TO BEAR.

WHAT'S *WRONG*, MOM?

I *THOUGHT* I HEARD... I MEAN--

≠SIGH≠ IT WAS *NOTHING*, SWEETHEART.

"JUST THE *WIND*."

...I DON'T KNOW ABOUT *YOU*, WEBS--BUT I'M FREAKIN' *EXHAUSTED*.

ME TOO.

TURNING MYSELF INTO A *SANDSTORM*? WHAT WAS I *THINKIN'*?

DITTO. I...*UH*...THINK I WENT A LITTLE *CRAZY* THERE FOR A MINUTE.

DON'T KNOW IF YOU NOTICED-- BUT MOST OF YOUR MONEY KINDA... *BLEW AWAY*.

I *NOTICED*, I *NOTICED*.

MAN, IT AIN'T *EASY* BEIN'... WHATEVER THE HELL I *AM* NOW.

TELL ME ABOUT IT! I MEAN... TURNING INTO *SAND*? CRAWLING ON WALLS LIKE A *HUMAN SPIDER*?

AND WHO CAN YOU *TELL* ABOUT IT, RIGHT? I MEAN, WHO COULD EVER *POSSIBLY*--

--*UNDERSTAND*?

MAYBE--

MAYBE WE *TAKE FIVE*, *HUH*?

AND WE *DID*. GOT OUT OF THERE BEFORE THE *POLICE* CAUGHT UP WITH US, FOUND A NEARBY ROOFTOP...

...AND JUST TALKED:

ABOUT HOW DIFFICULT, HOW INCREDIBLY ***STRESSFUL,*** OUR LIVES HAD BECOME SINCE WE'D BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO--AS MARKO PUT IT--***WHATEVER THE HELL*** WE WERE.

AN' WE AIN'T NEVER GONNA ***BE*** NORMAL.

WHICH MEANS LIFE IS ALWAYS GONNA BE ***HARD*** FOR GUYS LIKE ***US.***

MAYBE IT COULD BE A LITTLE ***LESS*** HARD FOR YOU, IF YOU...*UH*--

WENT ***STRAIGHT?***

DON'T LAUGH... BUT I'VE ***THOUGHT*** ABOUT IT.

HERE COMES ***THE SANDMAN!*** WORLD'S ***GREATEST*** HERO!

BUT A MAN IS ***WHAT HE IS,*** Y'KNOW? AN' FOR ME TO CHANGE AT ***THIS*** POINT IN MY LIFE?

NOT HAPPENING. BUT ***YOU***--

YOU GOT THE MAKINGS OF ONE ***HECKUVA*** CROOK!

LIKE YOU SAID, MARKO--

--A MAN IS ***WHAT HE IS.***

HEY, LOOK, THE MONEY'S GONE--AN' I'M SO WASTED THAT...WORD OF HONOR...I WON'T BE MAKIN' ***ANY*** MORE ***TROUBLE*** TONIGHT.

AND HOW ***TERRIFYING*** THE FUTURE WAS. "NO MATTER HOW HARD WE TRY," MARKO SAID, "T' ACT LIKE NORMAL PEOPLE...WE ***AIN'T*** NORMAL."

SO WHAT SAY WE REST UP AND START OVER AGAIN ***TOMORROW? PACE BANK*** IN MIDTOWN AT ***NOON?***

MAYBE YOU'LL BEAT THE SANDY STUFFIN' OUTTA ME...MAYBE I'LL POUND YOU INTO ***WEBBED PULP.*** BUT JUST FOR TONIGHT--

--WE ***FORGIVE AND FORGET.***

I KNOW, I KNOW: HOW *DUMB* WAS I TO LET A WANTED CRIMINAL GO LIKE THAT? HOW *INCREDIBLY* NAIVE?

BUT I WAS JUST A *KID.* AND ANYWAY...

...SANDMAN ENDED UP GETTING HIMSELF *CAPTURED* THE NEXT DAY--BY THAT GLORY HOG *THE HUMAN TORCH,* OF ALL PEOPLE. AND YOU KNOW WHAT? WHEN I FOUND OUT...

IN STRANGE TALES #115. --DANNY

...I FELT *AWFUL.*

HELLO, OSBORN.

WHAT DO YOU *WANT,* NELS?

YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I WANT.

THE BOY.

WHY?

I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU. WHY GO AFTER MY *SON?*

I HAVE MY REASONS. BUT *DON'T WORRY,* NORMAN. ONCE I GET HARRY SETTLED--

--I'LL BE BACK *FOR YOU.*

BEEP EEEP EEEP

BACK AWAY FROM HIM, FREAK...NOW... OR WE'LL--

GO AHEAD--

--SHOOT!

TATTA TATTA TATTA TATTA

HEH-HEH. HAD THEM *READY* AND *WAITING* FOR ME-- EH, OSBORN?

THOUGHT YOU COULD *DESTROY* THE BIG BAD MONSTER AS EASILY AS YOU *CREATED* HIM.

BUT I'M NOT *YOUR* MONSTER ANYMORE! I'M... *EVOLVING*--

KATOOOM!

--INTO SOMETHING *FAR* MORE TERRIBLE AND, APPARENTLY--

"--INDESTRUCTIBLE!"

HARRY-- WHAT WAS THAT?

KRASH!

I DON'T KNOW, GWEN! I THINK--

HARRY--?!

NELS, PLEASE... I'M BEGGING YOU--

--NOT MY BOY! NOT MY--

KRAKASM!

I WAS FEELING PRETTY GOOD WHEN I GOT HOME THAT NIGHT.

I REALIZED THAT, IF I COULD HAVE A HEART-TO-HEART WITH THE ***SANDMAN***, I COULD ***CERTAINLY*** TALK THINGS THROUGH WITH AUNT MAY.

BREAKING NEWS

LIVE

--THE MAYOR INSISTS HE'S DONE NOTHING WRONG, AND--

HANG ON.

IN FACT, I WAS READY TO GO UPSTAIRS TO HER ROOM, DO IT RIGHT THEN AND THERE...

THIS JUST IN. HAROLD OSBORN, SON OF INDUSTRIALIST NORMAN OSBORN--

--HAS BEEN KIDNAPPED. DETAILS ARE INCOMPLETE, BUT--

...WHEN I HEARD ABOUT ***HARRY.***

PETER?

I...I'VE BEEN FEELING ***SICK*** ABOUT THE WAY THINGS HAVE BEEN BETWEEN US, AND--

--IT APPEARS THAT THE SAME CREATURE THAT ATTEMPTED TO TAKE THE OSBORN BOY SEVERAL DAYS AGO--

PETER...?

NORMAN OSBORN'S SON KIDNAPPED!

--IS RESPONSIBLE. MORE DETAILS AS THEY COME IN.

I SUPPOSE I COULD HAVE STAYED. HAD THAT TALK WITH MAY AND ***THEN*** GONE LOOKING FOR HARRY. BUT MY DELAY...

...COULD HAVE MEANT HIS ***LIFE.***

I ALREADY HAD ***UNCLE BEN'S*** DEATH WEIGHING ON MY CONSCIENCE, AND I WASN'T ABOUT TO ADD ***ANOTHER.*** NO, FAMILY WOULD HAVE TO WAIT-- TILL ***SPIDER-MAN'S*** WORK WAS DONE.

IT WASN'T THE ***FIRST*** TIME, AND I'M SORRY TO SAY...

...IT WOULDN'T BE THE ***LAST.***

3

?

Call me!

The Amazing Spider-Man

SHADOW OF THE GREEN GOBLIN

CHAPTER THREE: EYES IN THE NIGHT

WELL-- WHAT HAVE WE HERE? A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED ROBBERY?
AFTER DAYS OF GETTING KNOCKED AROUND NEW YORK BY A COUPLE OF SUPER-POWERED MALCONTENTS--

--THIS IS DOWNRIGHT *REFRESHING!*

IF ONLY I'D *FELT* AS CHIPPER AS I *SOUNDED.*

STAY AWAY, *SPIDER-MAN*-- OR THE OLD GUY GETS--

THE TRUTH IS, I'D BEEN SCOURING THE CITY FOR HOURS, SEARCHING FOR *HARRY OSBORN...*

...WHO'D BEEN KIDNAPPED BY *NELS VAN ADDER,* THE SO-CALLED *PROTO-GOBLIN.*

THE ONLY ONE WHO'S *GETTING* ANYTHING, CREEP--

SWOOP!

--IS *YOU!*

OF COURSE, I DIDN'T KNOW HIS NAME *THEN.* I DIDN'T FIND OUT VAN ADDER'S STORY TILL *YEARS LATER.*

I DIDN'T REALLY GET TO KNOW HARRY AND HIS FATHER, *NORMAN,* TILL YEARS LATER *EITHER*--BUT BEING NECK-DEEP IN THE OSBORN FAMILY'S SICKNESS AND DYSFUNCTION SO EARLY IN MY SPIDEY CAREER...

BLAM!

YOU TWO-BIT THUGS AND YOUR *GUNS!*

BLAM!

...SHOULD HAVE BEEN A *WARNING* ABOUT THE HORRORS TO COME.

BLAM!

YOU THINK THEY MAKE YOU POWERFUL! *IMPORTANT!*

BUT THEY JUST MAKE YOU--

DON'T *HURT* ME! I... I *SURRENDER!*

--PATHETIC!

WHOMP!

WAS I TALKING TO *HIM*...

...OR TO THE ANIMAL WHO GUNNED DOWN *UNCLE BEN?*

THANK YOU, SPIDER-MAN! *GOD BLESS YOU!*

IT HAD ONLY BEEN A MONTH OR SO SINCE BEN HAD BEEN KILLED, BUT IN SOME WAYS...

...IT FELT LIKE *CENTURIES.*

MY UNCLE'S DEATH WAS WHAT PROPELLED ME INTO THE *SUPER-HERO* GAME (NOT THE HEALTHIEST CAREER CHOICE)...

...BUT I WAS ONLY 15-- AND I HAD *NO CLUE* WHAT I WAS DOING. OH, SURE, I WAS TRYING MY BEST...

...BUT MY BEST LEFT A *LOT* TO BE DESIRED.

IT WAS BAD ENOUGH THAT *AUNT MAY* AND I HADN'T REALLY TALKED ABOUT HOW *DEVASTATED* WE WERE BY BEN'S PASSING...

...BUT I HAD TO MAKE EVERYTHING *WORSE* BY COMING HOME BEATEN AND BRUISED AFTER MY FIRST RUN-IN WITH VAN ADDER.

MAY WAS FRIGHTENED, SHE WAS ***ANGRY***--AND, CONSIDERING WHAT WE'D BOTH JUST BEEN THROUGH, I COULDN'T ***BLAME*** HER.

SO WHY WAS I STILL RUNNING AROUND THE CITY IN A HOMEMADE ***HALLOWEEN COSTUME...***

...PUTTING MY LIFE IN ***CONSTANT DANGER?***

WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME? I WONDERED.

SORRY I'M SO ***LATE,*** AUNT MAY.

WHAT KIND OF PERSON AM I TO PUT SPIDER-MAN'S NEEDS...

LOST TRACK OF TIME WHILE I WAS ***STUDYING.*** BUT, BOY, AM I ***STARVING!***

ANY OF YOUR FAMOUS ***MEAT LOAF*** LEFT IN--?

AUNT MAY...?

...ABOVE MY FAMILY'S?

NORMAN!

NORMAN!

NORMAN!

NORMAN!

WH-WHAT--

--WHAT DO YOU *WANT?*

YOU FEAR THE *DARK*, NORMAN--BUT THE DARKNESS IS YOUR *FRIEND!*

YOU FEAR THE *GOBLINS--*

--BUT WE ARE YOUR *DESTINY!*

ONLY *WE* UNDERSTAND YOU! ONLY *WE--*

LEAVE ME ALONE-- *PLEASE!*

--CAN SHOW YOU THE *WAY FORWARD!*

LEAVE ME--

--*ALONE!*

NORMAN OSBORN AWOKE WITH A START--GRIPPED BY A *PRIMAL FEAR.* SO MANY YEARS HAD PASSED, BUT HIS CHILDHOOD STILL *HAUNTED* HIM:

A LITTLE BOY, LOCKED AWAY IN THE DARK BY AN *ABUSIVE FATHER,* LEFT TO THE MERCY OF BLOODTHIRSTY GOBLINS...

...CONJURED BY A TERRIFIED CHILD'S *IMAGINATION.*

I HAVE SYMPATHY, *COMPASSION,* FOR THAT BOY. BUT NOT...

WHERE *AM* I?

WHAT... WHAT'S *HAPPENED* TO ME?

WAIT. I...I *REMEMBER!*

HARRY!

...FOR THE BLOODTHIRSTY *PSYCHOPATH* HE BECAME.

VAN ADDER TOOK MY *BOY!* HE TOOK--

THUMP

MR. OSBORN!

LET ME GET YOU BACK INTO BED BEFORE--

NO. *NO!*

I CAN'T STAY HERE... LIKE SOME *HELPLESS FOOL*... WHILE MY *SON* IS--

YOU'LL DO *EXACTLY* WHAT YOUR DOCTOR *TELLS* YOU TO DO.

ASIDE FROM A CONCUSSION AND SEVERAL CRACKED RIBS, THERE APPEAR TO BE LOW LEVELS OF A *PSYCHOACTIVE ALKALOID* IN YOUR SYSTEM.

HOW IS THAT *POSSIBLE*, DOCTOR?

BEST GUESS, *CAPTAIN STACY*, IS THE CREATURE *SECRETES* IT-- ALTHOUGH GOD ONLY KNOWS *HOW.*

YOU *REST*, NORMAN. LEAVE THAT... *THING* TO THE AUTHORITIES.

I'M...I'M *SORRY*--

GWEN...?

--BUT I CAN'T *STAY* HERE ANYMORE.

GWEN TOLD ME ABOUT THAT NIGHT: HOW OVERWHELMED, HOW *SICK* WITH FEAR AND WORRY, SHE'D BEEN.

I *CAN'T!*

"MY MOTHER," SHE SAID, "WAS IN THE SAME HOSPITAL, BEING EATEN ALIVE BY *PANCREATIC CANCER.*

GWEN... WAIT!

"HARRY...MY *BEST FRIEND*...HAD BEEN KIDNAPPED BY SOME CREATURE OUT OF A *NIGHTMARE.* AND I--

"--I JUST *FELL APART.*"

NO, GEORGE--

--*YOU* WAIT.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? MY DAUGHTER *NEEDS* ME--

AND *I* NEED MY *SON.*

SWEAR TO ME THAT YOU'LL DO EVERYTHING IN YOUR POWER--

--TO MAKE SURE THE POLICE BRING HIM *BACK.*

THEY'RE DOING THEIR VERY BEST--

--BUT IF THAT CREATURE OUT THERE IS THE SAME ONE MY ***BROTHER*** AND I ENCOUNTERED AT OSBORN INDUSTRIES YEARS AGO--

IN PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN #-1. --DANNY

"--THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE *EASY.*"

NOTHING IS EASY, NORMAN.

LIFE IS *PAIN.* LIFE IS *STRUGGLE.*

A *WAR* WITH OUR INNER DEMONS.

AND YOU KNOW, BETTER THAN MOST--

--THAT THE ONLY WAY TO *DEFEAT* THE DEMONS--

"--IS TO *BECOME* ONE *YOURSELF.*"

I'VE SAID BEFORE THAT SOME OF THIS NARRATIVE IS BASED ON MY MEMORIES, SOME ON EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS, NEWS REPORTS. AND SOME--

WELL, IT'S JUST *CONJECTURE.*

I DIDN'T WANT OUR REUNION TO *BE* THIS WAY, HARRY.

I KNOW FOR SURE THAT, AFTER THE PROTO-GOBLIN DELIVERED HARRY TO HIS MOTHER, *EMILY,* SHE MOVED HIM TO A CABIN...

...SOMEWHERE IN THE *HUDSON VALLEY.*

HIDING AWAY HERE.

YOU, DRUGGED. *UNCONSCIOUS.*

CAN I *SWEAR* THAT WHAT FOLLOWS IS WHAT HAPPENED IN THAT CABIN? *NO.* BUT PERMIT ME TO WEAVE A FEW CREATIVE LIES...

...TO REACH THE *TRUTH.*

I'VE DREAMED ABOUT THIS MOMENT FOR YEARS. WHY AM I SO *TERRIFIED* NOW?

I WANT TO TELL YOU *EVERYTHING*, HARRY... EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED AND WHY--

--BUT WHAT IF YOU DON'T...*WON'T*... UNDERSTAND? WHAT IF YOUR FATHER HAS POISONED *YOUR* MIND--

"--THE WAY HE ONCE POISONED *MINE?*

"OH, IT WASN'T *ALWAYS* THAT WAY. NORMAN AND I WERE IN COLLEGE WHEN WE FIRST MET--AND I WAS IMMEDIATELY ENCHANTED BY HIS CONFIDENCE, HIS *CHARISMA.*

"YOU'D BE SURPRISED, HARRY, AT HOW OPEN, HOW *VULNERABLE* HE COULD BE WITH ME--

"--ALTHOUGH I WONDER NOW IF IT WAS ALL AN ACT. A MANIPULATION TO GET ME TO *FALL IN LOVE* WITH HIM.

"WHATEVER THE CASE, IT CERTAINLY *WORKED.* LOVE? THAT'S *TOO SMALL* A WORD FOR WHAT I FELT.

"THE TWO OF US WOULD TALK AND TALK FOR HOURS... ABOUT OUR CHILDHOODS, OUR STRUGGLES. SOUNDS STRANGE, I KNOW--

"--BUT WE *BONDED* OVER THE FACT THAT WE BOTH HAD ALCOHOLIC FATHERS. YES, I GREW UP ON THE EDGE OF POVERTY, AND NORMAN GREW UP IN *PAMPERED PRIVILEGE*--

"--BUT THE *SCARS* WE CARRIED WERE THE SAME.

"AND, OF COURSE, ALL OF NORMAN'S PRIVILEGE *EVAPORATED* WHEN HIS FATHER, *AMBERSON,* BANKRUPTED THE FAMILY BUSINESS. IT WAS A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE FOR HIM--

"--AND ONE HE NEVER REALLY *RECOVERED* FROM.

"THERE WERE *WARNING SIGNS*, IN THOSE EARLY DAYS--AND IF I'D BEEN OLDER, WISER, I WOULD HAVE *HEEDED* THEM. NORMAN WOULD GO WANDERING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT--

"--INEVITABLY ENDING UP IN SOME SQUALID *BAR*: LOST IN TURBULENT THOUGHTS HE COULD NEVER BRING HIMSELF TO *SHARE*.

"I ONCE MADE THE MISTAKE OF FOLLOWING HIM, *CONFRONTING* HIM--

"--AND HE BECAME SO ANGRY, SO AGITATED, THAT HE ALMOST HIT ME. THE LOOK IN HIS EYES, THE NAKED RAGE: I'D NEVER SEEN ANYTHING *LIKE* IT.

"LATER, OF COURSE, NORMAN *WEPT*. BEGGED FOR MY FORGIVENESS. BUT NOW I WONDER IF EVEN *THAT* WAS A PERFORMANCE.

"YET ANOTHER *MANIPULATION*.

"BUT I WAS BARELY *20*, HARRY. BLINDED BY LOVE. AND SO I *FORGAVE* HIM.

"AND SO WE WERE *MARRIED*. AND WE WERE HAPPY--

"--FOR A *LITTLE WHILE*.

"BUT YOUR FATHER BECAME OBSESSED WITH BUILDING HIS BUSINESS, AMASSING A FORTUNE, A *REPUTATION*, TO DWARF AMBERSON'S.

"THAT GENTLE, VULNERABLE MAN I FIRST MET VANISHED--AND A *COLD, ARROGANT BULLY* TOOK HIS PLACE. OR PERHAPS HE *WAS ALWAYS THERE--*

"--AND I JUST COULDN'T *SEE* IT.

"THERE WERE TIMES NORMAN PUSHED ME TOO FAR...AND I'D THREATEN TO LEAVE. THEN THE *TEARS* WOULD COME AGAIN. THE DESPERATE PLEADING FOR FORGIVENESS.

"THE VAIN PROMISES TO CHANGE. TO BE A *BETTER MAN*. AND, LIKE A FOOL, I *STAYED*.

"A FOOL? *NO*. BECAUSE IF I *HADN'T* STAYED--YOU WOULDN'T *BE* HERE, HARRY. OH, AND WHEN YOU WERE BORN, IT WAS LIKE *GOD* TURNED ON A LIGHT, BRIGHTER THAN THE SUN--

"--THAT WARMED MY SOUL. GAVE *NEW MEANING* TO MY LIFE. EVEN YOUR *FATHER* SEEMED CHANGED BY YOUR BIRTH: HE WAS GENTLER, KINDER.

"BUT AS ALWAYS--

"--IT *DIDN'T LAST.*

"IT WAS AS IF HE POSSESSED A ***SECOND PERSONALITY.*** AS IF THE NORMAN OSBORN WHO WON MY HEART HAD BEEN A MASK. AND BENEATH IT? SOME GROTESQUE, PRIMAL CREATURE. A MONSTER.

"A *GOBLIN.*

"HE CONSTANTLY BELITTLED ME. CRITICIZED ME. CALLED MY FAMILY TRASH-- NOT ***WORTHY*** OF THE OSBORN BLOODLINE. THE ABUSE WENT ON DAY AFTER DAY AFTER ***DAY.***

"I WANTED TO LEAVE-- BUT I DIDN'T KNOW WHERE TO GO. WHO TO TURN TO. MY PARENTS WERE DEAD. I HAD NO FRIENDS-- YOUR FATHER ***SAW*** TO THAT.

"ALL I HAD WAS ***YOU.*** AND FOR A TIME--

"--THAT WAS MORE THAN ***ENOUGH.***

"BUT WHEN YOUR FATHER'S ***EMOTIONAL*** CRUELTY TOOK OTHER, ***DARKER*** FORMS--

"--I COULDN'T ***BEAR*** ANY MORE. I BEGGED NORMAN FOR A DIVORCE. 'JUST ***TRY*** TO LEAVE ME, TO TAKE HARRY,' HE SAID. 'WITH MY WEALTH, MY POWER AND INFLUENCE, YOU CAN REST ASSURED--

"'--I'LL ***DESTROY*** YOU.' SO I HATCHED A DESPERATE PLAN:

"A TRIP TO SWITZERLAND TO AN EXCLUSIVE SPA. A FIERY ***CAR ACCIDENT,*** THE BODY INSIDE-- APPROPRIATED FROM A LOCAL MEDICAL SCHOOL-- BURNED ***BEYOND RECOGNITION.***

"***EXTRAORDINARY,*** ISN'T IT, THE THINGS YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH--

"--WHEN YOU HAVE ***MONEY?*** BUT WHAT I ***DIDN'T HAVE--***

"--WAS MY SON. ABANDONING YOU WAS THE HARDEST THING I'VE EVER DONE. BUT I KNEW I'D ***COME BACK*** ONE DAY.

"I'M JUST SORRY... SO ***VERY*** SORRY... THAT IT'S TAKEN ME--"

--SO LONG.

A HEARTBREAKING TALE.

NELS...?

HE'S A MONSTER, ISN'T HE--OUR NORMAN?

YES. YES, HE IS.

YOU WEAR THE MONSTER'S SKIN--BUT NORMAN HAS THE MONSTER'S HEART.

AND IT'S TIME TO END HIM--

--ONCE AND FOR ALL.

AND THEN YOU'LL GIVE ME THE ANTIDOTE? I'LL BE...HUMAN AGAIN?

YOU HAVE MY WORD. ONE DOSE AND THE NIGHTMARE WILL BE OVER. BUT NOT UNTIL--

"--NORMAN OSBORN DIES."

THINGS WILL BE BETTER, HARRY--ONCE YOUR FATHER'S GONE.

WE'LL BUILD A GOOD LIFE TOGETHER--I SWEAR WE WILL.

AND NOW, MY DARLING BOY--

"--IT'S TIME TO *WAKE UP.*"

DON'T *DIE,* MOM.

PLEASE.

WE... WE HAVE TO FACE *REALITY,* GWEN.

WE HAVE TO FACE THE *VERY REAL POSSIBILITY* THAT YOUR MOTHER'S TIME IN THIS WORLD MAY BE--

NO! I DO ***NOT*** HAVE TO FACE THAT POSSIBILITY!

I'M NOT JUST GOING TO ***GIVE UP*** THE WAY YOU HAVE!

HOW CAN YOU EVEN ***SAY*** THAT?! DOESN'T SHE ***MATTER*** TO YOU?! DON'T YOU ***CARE?!***

I...I'M SO ***SORRY,*** DAD. I DIDN'T ***MEAN*** IT. I--

I ***KNOW*** YOU DIDN'T, GWENNY.

AND ***WHATEVER*** COMES, SWEETHEART...THE TWO OF US WILL ***HOLD TIGHT*** TO EACH OTHER...AND FACE IT ***TOGETHER.***

"THAT'S WHAT FAMILIES *DO*."

PETER PARKER--GET *IN* HERE RIGHT NOW!

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, WHAT IF YOU *FALL?* WHAT IF--?

I'M NOT A *CHILD*, AUNT MAY, SO STOP *TREATING* ME LIKE--

I...I'M *SORRY* ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED THE OTHER DAY. I UNDERSTAND WHY IT *UPSET* YOU--

--AND IT'LL *NEVER* HAPPEN AGAIN.

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING? *YOU*, OF ALL PEOPLE... GETTING INTO A *FIGHT?*

SIGH YOU'VE BEEN SO *DIFFERENT* LATELY, PETER.

WE'RE *BOTH* DIFFERENT. UNCLE BEN IS *GONE.*

HE'S GONE, AUNT MAY-- AND WE HAVEN'T *TALKED* ABOUT IT.

PETER, *PLEASE--*

"--COME INSIDE."

...I GUESS I'VE BEEN DOING WHAT I'VE *ALWAYS* DONE SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL.

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG...GO BAD...I TRY TO BE *STRONG*. NOT FOR *MYSELF*--

--BUT FOR THE PEOPLE I *LOVE*.

I DON'T WANT TO BURDEN YOU WITH MY GRIEF, PETER, SO I *BOTTLE IT UP*--

--AND TRY TO *PUSH THROUGH*.

YOU'RE NEVER... *WE'RE* NEVER... GOING TO PUSH THROUGH *ANYTHING* UNLESS YOU TALK ABOUT IT. UNLESS YOU--

UNLESS I *WHAT?*

RELIVE THAT HORRIBLE MOMENT WHEN YOUR UNCLE *DIED IN MY ARMS?*

BREAK DOWN CRYING--LIKE THE *WEAK, PATHETIC* OLD WOMAN I REALLY AM?

YOU'RE MANY THINGS, AUNT MAY-- BUT WEAK AND PATHETIC? *NEVER.*

YOU'RE THE STRONGEST...MOST *AMAZING*...PERSON I KNOW.

NOT... NOT LIKE *BEN PARKER*. HE WAS--

YEAH, HE WAS--

--WASN'T HE?

GOD, I *MISS* HIM.

ME TOO.

EVERY DAMN *MINUTE* OF EVERY DAMN *DAY.*

THINGS DIDN'T MAGICALLY CHANGE AFTER THAT.

AUNT MAY DIDN'T SUDDENLY OPEN UP, SHARING ALL HER FEARS AND WORRIES. THAT WASN'T HER NATURE.

SHE WAS MORE COMFORTABLE *PROJECTING* THOSE FEARS AND WORRIES ONTO ME. THAT'S WHY, TILL THE DAY SHE DIED, SHE WAS CONSTANTLY FUSSING OVER ME. TRYING, IN HER WAY, TO PROTECT ME FROM THE WORLD.

BUT SHARING OUR GRIEF THAT DAY, REMEMBERING UNCLE BEN AND CRYING TOGETHER, HELPED US BOTH *MOVE FORWARD...*

...EVEN IF IT WASN'T ENOUGH TO ASSUAGE MY TERRIBLE *GUILT.*

--SEARCH CONTINUES FOR HARRY OSBORN--

--SON OF INDUSTRIALIST **NORMAN OSBORN**, WHO WAS KIDNAPPED FROM THE OSBORNS' PARK AVENUE PENTHOUSE YESTERDAY.

LIVE **BREAKING NEWS**

ZONY

THE SAME INHUMAN ASSAILANT WHO'D MADE AN EARLIER ATTEMPT **SUCCEEDED** THIS TIME--PUTTING NORMAN OSBORN IN THE **HOSPITAL** IN THE PROCESS.

WHAT WOULD MAY SAY, I WONDERED, IF I TOLD HER ABOUT THE DAY I COULD HAVE STOPPED THE BURGLAR--AND *DIDN'T?* WHAT WOULD SHE SAY IF SHE DISCOVERED THAT, IF IT WASN'T FOR ME...

...BEN PARKER WOULD STILL BE *ALIVE?*

LOOK: I'VE DONE MY SHARE OF THERAPY OVER THE YEARS. I KNOW I WAS JUST A KID WHO MADE A DUMB... A *TRAGIC*...MISTAKE.

I DIDN'T PULL THAT TRIGGER-- A LOWLIFE NAMED *CARRADINE* DID.

BUT EVEN AFTER *ALL THIS TIME,* THERE ARE NIGHTS I CAN'T SLEEP. NIGHTS I'M HAUNTED BY CARRADINE'S SMUG FACE AS I LET HIM RUN PAST ME. EVEN AFTER *ALL THIS TIME...*

...I'M STILL TRYING TO *ATONE.*

GO AHEAD, NELS.

I KNOW YOU WANT TO *CRUSH THE LIFE* OUT OF ME.

SO *DO* IT.

DO IT!

HEH-HEH-HEH! BUT YOU CAN'T-- *CAN* YOU?

ALL THE *EXTRAORDINARY POWER* MY FORMULA GAVE YOU--

--AND *LOOK* AT YOU. YOU'RE *WEAK*, NELS. ALWAYS *HAVE* BEEN.

I SEE NOW WHAT MY *MISTAKE* WAS. I TRIED TO TURN *YOU* INTO THE EMBODIMENT OF MY *NIGHTMARES*--

--THE MIRROR IMAGE OF THE *GOBLINS* FROM MY PAST.

BUT THE TRUTH IS--

--I AM THE NIGHTMARE!

I AM THE GOBLIN!

YOU THINK I'M *WEAK*? MAYBE I WAS... *BEFORE*. BUT NOW?

I'M *DESPERATE*! I NEED MY *WIFE*, NORMAN, MY *CHILDREN*--

--AND IF EMILY SAYS THE ONLY WAY TO GET THEM BACK IS TO *KILL* YOU--

--THEN *SO BE IT*!

...EMILY...?

HER NAME WAS LIKE A KNIFE...

...*PLUNGED* INTO HIS HEART.

THWUPP

FOR JUST A MOMENT, ALL THE POSTURING, ALL THE ARROGANCE, *DRAINED AWAY*--AND THE GREAT NORMAN OSBORN WAS REDUCED...

...TO A BROKEN MAN.

WELL, WHADDYA KNOW?

I SWING BY TO CHECK ON MR. O AND LET HIM KNOW I'M STILL ON THE HUNT FOR HIS SON'S KIDNAPPER AND HERE YOU ARE--

--BIG AS LIFE AND TWICE AS GRUESOME!

--LEAVE ME ALONE?!

KRAAASH

JUST BEFORE HE CAME AT ME, I GLIMPSED THE AGONY ON VAN ADDER'S FACE. SAW THE WAY HIS BODY WAS PULSING, OOZING.

WHY?! WHY CAN'T I JUST HAVE SOME PEACE?!

WHY WON'T ANY OF YOU--

TRANSFORMING.

KR-AKKKK

BUT THEN...

WHAT--?!

THAT WAS STRANGE ENOUGH.

...THINGS GOT CONSIDERABLY *STRANGER.*

FOR *GOD'S SAKE,* PETER--DO SOMETHING!

DON'T LET BEN DIE AGAIN!

4

The Amazing Spider-Man

ONE MINUTE, I WAS IN MANHATTAN, BATTLING NELS VAN ADDER, THE *PROTO-GOBLIN*, TRYING TO STOP HIM FROM ATTACKING *NORMAN OSBORN*. AND THE *NEXT*...

...I WAS LOST IN A *NIGHTMARE*.

FOR *GOD'S SAKE--DO* SOMETHING!

DON'T LET BEN DIE AGAIN!

A-AUNT MAY...?

UNCLE BEN?!

IT HAD BEEN LESS THAN A MONTH SINCE *BEN PARKER* WAS MURDERED BY THAT BURGLAR-- SO HOW COULD MY UNCLE POSSIBLY BE ALIVE? AND HOW DID I SUDDENLY FIND MYSELF IN OUR LIVING ROOM IN QUEENS...

...RELIVING THE *WORST TRAGEDY* OF MY *LIFE?*

SHADOW OF THE GREEN GOBLIN

CHAPTER FOUR: THE MOURNING SUN

IN THAT MOMENT, THERE WAS NO TIME FOR QUESTIONS: I HAD TO *SAVE* UNCLE BEN.

BUT NO MATTER HOW MUCH I STRUGGLED TO GET UP, NO MATTER HOW *DESPERATELY* I TRIED...

...I COULDN'T MOVE. ALL I COULD DO WAS WATCH IT HAPPEN...

...ALL OVER AGAIN.

YOU!

YOU DID THIS!

YOU HAD A CHANCE TO *STOP* HIM! BUT YOU JUST *STOOD* THERE--

--AND LET THAT MONSTER *GET AWAY!*

I WANT TO SEE YOUR *FACE!* I WANT TO LOOK IN THE *EYES* OF THE MAN WHO--

P-PETER...?

I... I *DIDN'T KNOW,* AUNT MAY. I DIDN'T *MEAN* TO--

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANY OF YOUR *PATHETIC* EXCUSES!

ALL OF THIS IS *YOUR FAULT!*

WUD

SOMEONE ELSE MAY HAVE *PULLED THE TRIGGER--*

KRAK

KRAAK!

--BUT YOU *KILLED YOUR UNCLE!*

KRAAAK!

IT WAS AS IF, WITH EVERY BLOW, MORE *GUILT*, MORE *SHAME*, CAME ROARING TO THE SURFACE.

KRAAAAK!

BUT, EVEN AS THAT WAS HAPPENING, A PART OF ME UNDERSTOOD SOMETHING WAS *TERRIBLY WRONG.*

MY FEELINGS MAY HAVE BEEN REAL, BUT THIS...

...WASN'T REALITY.

AUNT MAY... I'M SO SORRY--

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? WHY WON'T YOU FIGHT BA--?

OH NO.

THAT'S WHAT INDUCED MY HALLUCINATORY STATE.

I DISCOVERED LATER THAT VAN ADDER'S BODY WAS IN A STATE OF DEGENERATIVE METAMORPHOSIS...

...AND, AS HE REACHED EACH NEW STAGE, IT TEMPORARILY SECRETED A PSYCHOACTIVE ALKALOID.

BUT MY SUFFERING WAS NOTHING...

IT'S HAPPENING AGAIN.

...COMPARED TO HIS.

HE'D BEEN A GUINEA PIG FOR OSBORN'S BIOGENETIC FORMULA-- BUT IT WAS UNSTABLE, TEARING VAN ADDER APART FROM THE INSIDE OUT.

THE POOR MAN HAD LOST HIS FAMILY, HIS HUMANITY. NOW HE WAS IN DANGER OF LOSING HIS LIFE.

IF ONLY I'D KNOWN THE TRUTH THEN. IF ONLY I HADN'T SEEN NELS AS SOME KIND OF DEMENTED MONSTER. MAYBE, IN SOME SMALL WAY...

...I COULD HAVE HELPED.

AND MAYBE IF I'D KNOWN THE TRUTH ABOUT OSBORN, I COULD HAVE STOPPED HIM THEN AND THERE...

...AND SAVED US ALL A LIFETIME OF SUFFERING.

IT'S EASY TO LOOK BACK ACROSS THE YEARS AND SAY, "I COULD HAVE" OR "I SHOULD HAVE." BUT REGRETS, I'VE LEARNED, ARE NOT JUST USELESS...

...THEY'RE *TOXIC.*

ALL WE CAN DO IS TRY TO LEARN FROM THE PAST, FROM OUR INEVITABLE MISTAKES, AND ***MOVE ON.***

HAVE I BEEN ABLE TO DO THAT? HONESTLY? ***NO.*** I LIVE WITH A LIFETIME OF REGRETS, A MOUNTAIN OF GUILT. BUT ON MY BEST DAYS...

...I'VE ***MADE PEACE*** WITH IT.

NORMAN NEVER DID.

MR. OSBORN-- WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

YOU'RE IN ***NO CONDITION*** TO LEAVE!

THE DEMONS OF HIS TORTURED CHILDHOOD, THE GOBLINS THAT HAUNTED HIS NIGHTS...

...WERE ALWAYS ***WITH*** HIM.

IN CASE YOU DON'T KNOW IT--MY MONEY ***BUILT*** THIS HOSPITAL.

SO IF YOU VALUE YOUR JOB--

--YOU'LL GET THE ***HELL*** OUT OF MY WAY.

AND SOON ENOUGH, HE'D WEAR THE GOBLIN'S ***FACE,*** ASSUME THE GOBLIN'S ***FORM.***

OH, YES...

...IF ONLY I'D *KNOWN.*

...GOT SOME SANDWICHES FROM DOWNSTAIRS, DAD.

I'M NOT HUNGRY, *GWEN.*

GWEN STACY'S MOTHER, *HELEN,* WAS IN THE SAME HOSPITAL AS NORMAN. BUT UNLIKE HIM...

...*SHE* WOULDN'T BE *WALKING OUT.*

I DON'T *REMEMBER* THE LAST TIME YOU ATE.

I...I HAVE NO *APPETITE,* SWEETHEART. I'M JUST--

JUST *WHAT?*

HE COULDN'T PUT IT INTO WORDS...

...BUT HIS *TEARS* SPOKE VOLUMES.

DON'T CRY, DAD.

WHY NOT?

WE HAVE TO ALLOW OURSELVES TO *FEEL,* GWEN. WE HAVE TO ALLOW OURSELVES--

--TO *GRIEVE.*

"MY FATHER," GWEN TOLD ME, YEARS LATER, *"WAS A POLICE CAPTAIN. HE'D SPENT HIS ENTIRE CAREER DEALING WITH THE DARKEST, UGLIEST ASPECTS OF HUMAN NATURE.*

GEORGE... GWENNY...

"AND HE'D FACED IT ALL WITH BRAVERY AND COMPASSION.

"BUT LOSING MY MOM TO CANCER--

COME... *SIT* WITH ME. I...I *NEED* YOU NOW--

"--JUST WRECKED HIM.

--MY LOVES.

"I WATCHED HIM FALL APART IN FRONT OF MY EYES. AND I GUESS--

"--I FELL WITH HIM."

FAMILIES ARE THE *FOUNDATION* OF OUR LIVES. GWEN AND I, WE WERE LUCKY--BECAUSE, *WHATEVER* OUR STRUGGLES...

WH...WHAT'S *HAPPENING?*

...THOSE FOUNDATIONS WERE BUILT OF KINDNESS, RESPECT...

...AND *LOVE ABOVE ALL.* THE *OSBORN* FAMILY? WELL...

YOUR HEAD WILL CLEAR IN A MINUTE, HARRY. JUST TAKE A *DEEP BREATH,* AND--

BUT...WHERE *AM* I? AND WHO... WHO ARE *YOU?*

WE'RE IN *NEW PALTZ.* AT THE *CABIN* I USED TO TAKE YOU TO WHEN YOU WERE A BABY.

...IT WAS A LITTLE MORE... *COMPLEX* THAN THAT.

YOU USED TO--?

MOM...?

NO, I CAN'T *SWEAR* THIS IS HOW IT HAPPENED--BUT SHE MUST HAVE TOLD HIM THE STORY...

...OF HER TROUBLED MARRIAGE TO NORMAN, HER DESPERATE ESCAPE, HER *PAIN* AT LEAVING HER YOUNG SON BEHIND:

NOT SURE HOW HARRY WAS GOING TO REACT, BUT HOPING, *PRAYING...*

...THAT HE'D *UNDERSTAND.*

HARRY...?

IT'S... IT'S A *LOT* TO TAKE IN.

BUT I GUESS... I GUESS ALL THAT REALLY MATTERS--

--IS THAT YOU'RE BACK.

OH, HARRY-- I THOUGHT ABOUT YOU...CARRIED YOU WITH ME--

--EVERY SINGLE DAY.

A BEAUTIFUL MOMENT. A TOUCHING REUNION. WHAT A TRAGEDY...

BUT--

--BUT WAIT.

I GET WHY YOU LEFT DAD. I KNOW HE CAN BE... DIFFICULT.

BUT IF YOU LOVED ME SO MUCH, MOM--HOW COULD YOU LET ME BELIEVE YOU WERE DEAD?

WHY...WHY DIDN'T YOU TAKE ME WITH YOU?

WHY DID YOU LEAVE ME?!

EXCELLENT QUESTION.

...THAT IT COULDN'T LAST.

NORMAN!

YOU SHOULD HAVE FOUND A BETTER SANCTUARY, EMILY. DIDN'T YOU REALIZE--

--THAT YOUR FAVORITE HIDEAWAY WOULD BE THE FIRST PLACE I'D LOOK?

OR IS THIS WHAT YOU WANTED?

THE THREE OF US TOGETHER AGAIN--

"--THE WAY IT WAS ALWAYS *MEANT TO BE.*"

VAN ADDER HAD BEEN TRACKING NORMAN UPSTATE, MAKING HIS WAY TOWARD THE OSBORN CABIN...

NORTH

Alba

EXIT 15A

NORTH

17

59

...AND *I'D* BEEN TRACKING *HIM.* GIVEN THE REPORTS OF A ***RED-SKINNED ABOMINATION*** BOUNDING UP THE NEW YORK STATE THRUWAY...

...IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR ME TO *FIND* HIM.

HIYA, GRUESOME! *MISS* ME?

YOU? *AGAIN?!*

WHY WON'T YOU LEAVE ME--

--ALONE?!

SWAKKK!

THE ***BAD*** NEWS? PROTO-GOBLIN'S PHYSICAL TRANS-MUTATIONS HAD MADE HIM ***STRONGER THAN EVER.***

THE GOOD NEWS?

HONK! HONNNK! HONNNKK!

UH-OH.

THAT MEANT I DIDN'T HAVE TO *HOLD BACK.*

UNFORTUNATELY...

KRUNK!

SMASH!

SKREEEEEEEE

KRAKSHH

NO!

...THINGS DIDN'T EXACTLY TURN OUT THE WAY I'D *HOPED.*

NONONONONONO--

--NO!

LOOK: I WAS *15.* BEING SPIDER-MAN, HAVING THOSE EXTRAORDINARY ABILITIES, WAS STILL *NEW* TO ME. AND LOOKING BACK...

...IT'S A MIRACLE I DIDN'T DO EVEN *MORE* DAMAGE.

THE MONSTER!

HE'S *GONE!*

...BUT THE STATE POLICE DIDN'T *SEE* IT THAT WAY.

HANDS IN THE AIR!

I'M *FLATTERED* BY ALL THE ATTENTION, FELLAS--

--BUT, Y'SEE, I'M THE *SHY, RETIRING* TYPE--

--SO I THINK I'D BETTER *GO!*

AT LEAST, I'D MANAGED TO SAVE THE BUS AND EVERYONE *ON* IT...

MY LAME JOKES? JUST A COVER FOR THE FACT THAT I FELT LIKE AN *INEFFECTUAL IDIOT...*

...WHO WAS IN *WAY* OVER HIS HEAD.

DON'T *LEAVE* US--

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

--PLEASE.

SHE'S *GONE*, GWEN.

"YOUR MOTHER'S *GONE.*"

DO YOU *SEE,* SON? *THIS* IS THE WOMAN I CHOSE TO LOVE. A WOMAN WITH NO *HEART.* NO *SOUL.*

SHE *ABANDONED* US. *TRICKED* US INTO THINKING SHE WAS *DEAD.*

LET'S MAKE SURE SHE *STAYS* THAT WAY.

DAD-- *NO!*

YOU'RE THE *ONLY WOMAN* I'VE EVER *LOVED--*

--AND YOU *BETRAYED* ME.

LOVE? IS *THAT* WHAT YOU CALL IT?

SURE SEEMED LIKE *ABUSE* TO ME.

DAD... I'M *BEGGING* YOU--

--DON'T *DO* THIS.

GET OUT.

GET OUT-- AND DON'T YOU EVER DARE COME BACK.

COME WITH ME, HARRY!

THE TWO OF US CAN BUILD A LIFE TOGETHER! WE CAN--

YOU HEARD WHAT MY FATHER SAID--

SWAK!

GET OUT!

FAMILY, AS I'VE SAID, IS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR LIVES. BUT WHEN THAT FOUNDATION BREAKS, ALL THAT'S LEFT...

GOODBYE.

...IS PAIN.

I'M SORRY, SON.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SORRY, DAD. SHE'S THE ONE WHO--

NO. NOT ABOUT THAT.

ABOUT THIS. A CHEMICAL--TO MAKE YOU FORGET.

HISSSSSSSS

EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED IN THIS CABIN. EVERY LIE SHE TOLD YOU. YOUR MOTHER IS DEAD, HARRY.

"SHE WAS NEVER HERE."

KA ACH

NELS! WHAT...WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

NORMAN'S AT THE CABIN! IF YOU GO THERE NOW, YOU CAN--

I'M NOT KILLING HIM. I WON'T KILL HIM!

I'M NOT A MURDERER, DAMMIT!

BUT YOU--!

I SWEAR-- IF YOU DON'T GIVE ME THE ANTIDOTE YOU PROMISED...IF YOU DON'T MAKE ME HUMAN AGAIN--

--YOU'LL BE PRAYING FOR DEATH!

I-- I CAN'T!

YOU CAN... AND YOU WILL... OR ELSE--

NO. NO, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. I CAN'T GIVE YOU THE ANTIDOTE--

--BECAUSE THERE ISN'T ONE.

WHAT?!

I LIED... TO GET MY SON BACK. AND I LOST HIM ANYWAY. I'M...I'M AS BAD AS NORMAN.

I GUESS I REALLY AM AN OSBORN--

--AFTER ALL.

AND WHAT ABOUT ME? MY WIFE! MY CHILDREN!

LOOK AT WHAT I AM NOW, YOU DECEITFUL--

THWAP

YOU WANNA THREATEN SOMEBODY?

TRY ME!

I HADN'T HEARD THEIR CONVERSATION.

I'D BEEN FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF CHEMICAL SLUDGE, CELLULAR DEGENERATION, AND FOUND HIM THERE: ATTACKING AN INNOCENT WOMAN I'D NEVER SEEN BEFORE.

BUT, EVEN THEN, I COULD SEE HOW MUCH VAN ADDER WAS SUFFERING. EVEN THEN, SOMETHING ABOUT HIM...

...BROKE MY HEART.

NO.

OH GOD--

NOOO!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

YES. THANKS TO YOU.

THAT THING... IT CAME OUT OF NOWHERE. ATTACKED ME FOR NO REASON, AND--

I'LL GET YOU HELP.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. MY CAR STILL WORKS. I'LL BE FINE.

"JUST STOP VAN ADDER."

IT WAS ONLY LATER THAT I REALIZED SHE'D SAID HIS NAME. AND IT WASN'T TILL MANY YEARS LATER...

...THAT I DISCOVERED WHO THAT MYSTERY WOMAN REALLY WAS.

I SEARCHED THE WOODS FOR HOURS--BUT THERE WAS NO TRACE OF THE PROTO-GOBLIN.

WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM? WHERE DID HE GO?

THAT, TOO, WAS SOMETHING I DIDN'T DISCOVER...

...FOR A *VERY* LONG TIME.

I KNOW THERE'S NOTHING I CAN SAY TO MAKE IT BETTER, GWEN. BUT *WHATEVER YOU NEED--*

--I'M *HERE* FOR YOU.

BUT *YOU*, HARRY...AFTER WHAT YOU'VE JUST *BEEN* THROUGH--

I'M FINE. TRUTH IS... I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER MUCH ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT CREATURE *KIDNAPPED* ME.

SHOCK, I GUESS.

I'M JUST GLAD YOU'RE OKAY.

YOU'RE MY *BEST FRIEND*, HARRY, AND I--

YEAH--

--I LOVE YOU *TOO.*

YOU WENT THROUGH THIS WHEN YOU LOST *EMILY*, NORMAN... SO TELL ME--

--DOES THIS AWFUL PAIN EVER *GO AWAY?*

OVER TIME.

BUT THE SAD FACT IS, ALL IT TAKES IS THE *SMALLEST REMINDER--*

--AND I FEEL THE GRIEF, THE LOSS, AS IF IT ALL JUST HAPPENED *TODAY.*

I DON'T THINK THAT EVER REALLY *CHANGES*, GEORGE. AND PERHAPS--

--IT *NEVER SHOULD.*

DID HE *MEAN* THOSE WORDS?

DID HE TRULY LOVE EMILY? WAS HE CAPABLE OF LOVING *ANYONE?*

THERE ARE DAYS I'M CERTAIN HE *WASN'T.* THAT HE WAS A CORRUPT, AMORAL SOCIOPATH.

THAT *NORMAN OSBORN* WAS THE MASK AND THE *GREEN GOBLIN...*

...WAS THE HIDEOUS REALITY.

PETER...?

Hmmm...?

BUT THERE ARE DAYS...

...I'M JUST NOT SURE.

IT'S AFTER TEN. TIME TO GET UP--

--AND HAVE A LITTLE *BREAKFAST.*

"A LITTLE"? EGGS...PANCAKES... BACON...POTATOES... TOAST.

YOU'RE SO *SKINNY,* PETER. WE HAVE TO *FATTEN YOU UP.*

I'M JUST FINE THE WAY I *AM,* AUNT MAY.

YOU *ARE,* AREN'T YOU?

JUST FINE.

EVEN AFTER ALL THIS TIME, IT'S STILL HARD FOR ME TO WRAP MY HEAD AROUND THE FACT THAT MAY PARKER IS *GONE.*

BUT SHE'S NOT *REALLY* GONE, IS SHE? SHE'S WITH ME *EVERY DAY.*

HER VOICE, ALONG WITH *UNCLE BEN'S,* ENCOURAGING ME. GUIDING ME.

I WOULDN'T BE THE HUSBAND, THE FATHER, THE *MAN,* I AM TODAY IF NOT FOR THEM. AND I'LL HOLD THEM IN MY HEART...

...FOREVER.

THE END.

#1 variant by ALEX MALEEV

#1 *hidden gem variant by* **PAUL SMITH & RICHARD ISANOVE**

#1 *variant by* **MIKE DEL MUNDO**

STILL AMAZING!

MARVEL COMICS GROUP

1 VARIANT EDITION

RATED T

SPIDER-MAN
SHADOW OF THE GREEN GOBLIN

THE SPIDER IS DEAD -- AND GREEN GOBLIN HAS SLAIN HIM!

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN BATTLES THE GREEN GOBLIN TO THE DEATH-- AND BEYOND!

'NUFF SAID!

PANOSIAN AFTER GENE COLAN

#1 *vampire variant by* **DAN PANOSIAN**

#2 variant by JULIAN TOTINO TEDESCO

#2 *black costume variant by* **DAN PANOSIAN**

#3 *marvel masterpieces III variant by* GREG & TIM HILDEBRANDT

ARTHUR AND GEORGE STACY INVESTIGATE THE SKETCHY BUSINESS DEALINGS OF NORMAN OSBORN IN THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE PROTO-GOBLIN.

FLASHBACK
PETER PARKER
SPIDER-MAN
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
MINUS 1 JULY
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
THE MACABRE MYSTERY OF THE PROTO-GOBLIN!
WHAT ARE THE DREADED SECRETS OF NORMAN OSBORN?™
WHERE WILL THE CLUES LEAD THE STALWART STACY BROTHERS?™
AND HOW WILL IT AFFECT THE LIFE OF YOUNG PETER PARKER?™

SALUTATIONS, SPIDERPHILES!

I DON'T MIND ADMITTING IT, YOUR PAL STAN LEE IS SO GLAD TO BE WITH YOU THAT I CAN'T STOP WIGGLING MY WEBS IN DELIGHT!

IF YOU'RE WONDERING WHY I'M HERE -- (NO MATTER ***WHERE*** I AM PEOPLE WONDER WHY I'M THERE!) -- IT'S TO JOIN THE MIGHTY MARVEL FLASHBACK SERIES --

-- TO HELP YOU THRILL TO THE ASTONISHING EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF A CERTAIN SPECIAL STUDENT BEFORE HE BECAME THE WORLD'S FAVORITE ARACHNID!

EVENTS THAT ARE PART OF THE TANGLED WEB IN THE LIFE OF PETER PARKER.

EVENTS THAT ARE DESTINED TO HAVE A SHOCKING EFFECT ON THE LIFE OF PETER PARKER.

AND IT ALL HAPPENS IN A SENSES-STAGGERING SAGA WE CALL...

STAN LEE PRESENTS

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN FLASHBACK

HOWARD MACKIE - WRITER
DAN FRAGA - PENCILER
SCOTT HANNA - INKER
GREGORY WRIGHT - COLORS
RS & COMICRAFT/KS - LETTERS
RALPH MACCHIO - EDITOR
BOB HARRAS - CHIEF

THE QUEENS, NEW YORK HOME OF POLICE CAPTAIN GEORGE STACY...

BEINGS WITH SUPER-POWERS WHO ARE CAPABLE OF OVERTHROWING HUMANITY?

NO, ART... I DON'T!

ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU DON'T BELIEVE THEY ***EXIST***, GEORGE?

I'M TELLING YOU, GEORGE, ***THAT'S*** WHERE YOU SHOULD BE FOCUSING YOUR INVESTIGATION.

THEY DO EXIST. AND OTHERS LIKE THEM. THE GOVERNMENT --

PLEASE, ART, CAN WE GET THROUGH ONE CONVERSATION WITHOUT YOU TURNING TO GOVERNMENT CONSPIRACIES AND COVER-UPS?

F.D.R. KNEW ABOUT THE PEARL HARBOR ATTACK, THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION, AREA 51...

...NOT EVERYTHING IS A CONSPIRACY, ART. YOU HAVE THE POTENTIAL OF BEING A HIGHLY RESPECTED PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR AND SECURITY EXPERT, BUT ***NOT*** IF YOU KEEP TALKING LIKE THIS.

MAYBE NOT, BIG BROTHER, BUT THE TRUTH IS THE TRUTH AND I HAVE CONTACTS THAT TELL ME THAT THE ***MUTANT SITUATION*** IS ABOUT TO BLOW UP IN ALL OF OUR FACES.

AND ALL I'M SAYING IS THAT THE KILLER YOU'RE LOOKING FOR ***COULD*** BE TIED INTO IT.

MUTANTS, ART? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

I'M LOOKING FOR A KILLER.

A ***SERIAL KILLER*** AT THAT.

AND I DON'T HAVE TIME TO HAVE MY MEN CHASING SHADOWS.

SUIT YOURSELF, GEORGE, BUT I'M TELLING YOU --

THAT'S MY PAGER.

BEEPED

SORRY, HELEN, IT'S THE PRECINCT. AN EMERGENCY. I'VE GOT TO GO.

ME TOO, NANCY. I'M GETTING BEEPED BY THE HOME OFFICE. I'LL CALL YOU LATER. AND SEE IF GWEN AND JILL WILL KEEP AN EYE ON PAUL... WILL YOU?

YOU KNOW, HELEN, OUR HUSBANDS ARE MORE ALIKE THAN THEY CARE TO ADMIT.

YOU AND I KNOW THAT, NANCY, BUT LET'S HOPE ***THEY*** FIGURE IT OUT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

IT STANDS ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE BIG APPLE AS A CAPITALISTIC IDEAL.

A COMPANY STARTED BY ONE YOUNG MAN, A DREAM AND RUTHLESS AMBITION.

IT IS OSBORN INDUSTRIES, CULTURE LOVERS, AND IT IS WHERE OUR STORY TRULY BEGINS.

WHAT IS GOING ON HERE, SERGEANT?

HOW YA DOIN', CAP'N? SORRY TO PULL YOU AWAY FROM THE FAMILY AND ALL --

YEAH... SORRY, CAP'N.

MORELLI!

ONE OF OUR CRUISERS SPOTTED A SUSPICIOUS INDIVIDUAL LURKIN' AROUND THE GATES OUTSIDE THE OSBORN PLANT.

THE OFFICERS TRIED TO STOP THE INDIVIDUAL FOR QUESTIONING AND WERE SUBSEQUENTLY ATTACKED.

HOW ARE THE MEN?

PRETTY BAD, CAP'N, BUT THE PARAMEDICS THINK THEY'LL PULL THROUGH.

GET ME THEIR HOME NUMBERS. I'LL CALL THEIR FAMILIES MYSELF.

NOW WHAT ABOUT THE SUSPECT?

HE ESCAPED. RAN INTO THE OSBORN PLANT.

THEN ***WHAT*** ARE YOU DOING OUT ***HERE***, MAN?

SIR, THAT'S THE THING OF WHY WE HAD TO NOTIFY YOU.

IT'S ***MR. OSBORN.*** HE WON'T LET US THROUGH THE GATES AND HE WOULDN'T TALK TO ANY OF US.

SAID HE'D ONLY DEAL WITH ***YOU,*** CAP'N.

A FEW MINUTES LATER...

NORMAN! WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ME? MY MEN HAVE A JOB TO DO HERE.

I'M WELL AWARE OF THAT, GEORGE. YOU KNOW I HAVE THE UTMOST RESPECT FOR THE BOYS IN BLUE, BUT...

...I SIMPLY CAN-NOT ALLOW THEM ON MY PREMISES UNESCORTED, GEORGE.

OSBORN INDUSTRIES IS ENGAGED IN SEVERAL HIGHLY SENSITIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS AND I WOULD BE REMISS IF I ALLOWED YOU HERE WITHOUT BEING ACCOMPANIED BY MY SECURITY CHIEF.

YOU ARE PUTTING ME IN A VERY UN-COMFORTABLE SITUATION, NORMAN.

HOW WOULD IT LOOK FOR ME TO ARREST ONE OF THE CITY'S MOST PROMINENT CITIZENS? YOU'RE PUTTING MY JOB, NOT TO MENTION OUR ***FRIENDSHIP***, IN JEOPARDY.

AS FOR THE LATTER... I APOLOGIZE. AS FOR THE FORMER... ***THAT*** IS SOMETHING YOU WILL HAVE TO TAKE UP WITH MY LAWYER, GEORGE.

BUT... THAT APPEARS TO BE UNNECESSARY. MY NEWLY APPOINTED HEAD OF SECURITY IS ARRIVING NOW.

I BELIEVE YOU'VE HAD SOME DEALINGS WITH HIM IN THE PAST, GEORGE.

INDEED I HAVE.

SORRY IF I'VE MISSED THE FUN. NOT EVERYBODY HAS THE LUXURY OF ZIPPING THROUGH TRAFFIC WITH A SPINNING RED LIGHT ATOP THEIR CAR LIKE MY BIG BROTHER.

MOMENTS LATER, IN THE CAVERNOUS EXPANSE OF THE OSBORN FACILITY, THE TWO STACY BROTHERS SEARCH OUT THEIR ELUSIVE PREY...

ART, YOU'RE REALLY NOT NEEDED HERE.

YOU ARE ON ***MY*** TURF, GEORGE. OSBORN WANTS YOU TO HAVE AN ESCORT... I'M STAYING.

JUST TRY TO STAY OUT OF THE WAY AND LET US DO OUR JOB.

BY THE ***BOOK***, CAPTAIN STACY, ***SIR!***

THIS PLACE IS LIKE A ***MAZE***. THIS GUY COULD ELUDE US IN HERE FOR --

FAN OUT.

YEAH, BIG BROTHER. I'M GETTING THE SAME FEELING YOU ARE. WE ARE ***CLOSE***.

AARRGH!

OFFICER ***DOWN!***

IT'S *TURNER*, CAPTAIN! HE'S HURT BAD!

YOU MEN GET TURNER TO SAFETY.

MY BROTHER AND I WILL TRACK DOWN THE ONE WHO DID THIS.

I'M ON OUR MAN, GEORGE!

ARTHUR! FOR ONCE IN YOUR LIFE, THINK *BEFORE* YOU ACT!

DO *NOT* PURSUE HIM ON YOUR OWN!

DID YOU HEAR ME? I SAID DO NOT --

OOPH!

FWAK

FREEZE!

SHOOT IT, GEORGE!

STAND DOWN!

RRRRRRR!

PTOOM PTOOM PTOOM PTOOM PTOOM PTOOM

WHERE DID HE GO?

I UNLOADED SIX FROM MY SERVICE REVOLVER STRAIGHT INTO HIS CHEST.

THERE IS NO WAY A MAN COULD HAVE SURVIVED THAT.

NEWS FLASH, BIG BROTHER...

...HE DID MORE THAN SURVIVE.

WHAT IS THIS RED FLUID?

LOOKS LIKE ***BLOOD*** TO ME.

REALLY?

I'D SAY WE MIGHT HAVE FOUND YOUR SERIAL KILLER, CAPTAIN STACY. STILL DON'T BELIEVE IN ***MUTANTS***, GEORGE?

DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. THERE IS A LOGICAL EXPLANATION FOR THIS.

WHICH I WILL HAVE ONCE I LOCATE OUR CRIMINAL.

YOU GET BACK TO ME ONCE YOU'VE GOT ONE, GEORGE.

MEANWHILE I'M GOING TO POKE AROUND AND SEE WHAT I CAN FIND.

HMMM?

WHAT'S THIS?

OUR KILLER SEEMS TO HAVE LEFT BEHIND A MAJOR CLUE...

...AN ***OSBORN INDUSTRIES*** IDENTIFICATION BADGE.

OSBORN IND
VAN ADDER, N
143 E. GENESEE
NEW YORK, N.Y. 1
D.O.B. 10/24/64
SEX: M HEIGHT: 6
WEIGHT: 190 LBS. EYE

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE MONSTROUS RED KILLER AND OSBORN INDUSTRIES NAGS AT ARTHUR STACY THROUGH THE ENTIRE NIGHT UNTIL...

THE NEXT DAY AT A SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EXPOSITION SPONSORED BY NORMAN OSBORN, HE DECIDES TO CONFRONT HIS EMPLOYER.

OSBORN SCIENCE LABS

OSBORN SCIENCE LABS

NORMAN! I WAS WONDERING IF YOU HAD A FEW MINUTES TO SPARE REGARDING YESTERDAY'S INCIDENT.

NO TIME, ARTHUR. I'VE GOT A SPEECH TO MAKE.

IT WON'T TAKE A MINUTE.

WHAT IS IT?

I WAS WONDERING IF YOU KNEW OF A MAN BY THE NAME OF NELS VAN ADDER?

VAN ADDER? AH YES...

A DISGRUNTLED EMPLOYEE. WE LET HIM GO MONTHS AGO.

THE THING IS I FOUND AN OSBORN INDUSTRIES I.D. BADGE WITH THE MAN'S NAME AFTER YESTERDAY'S ATTACK.

WHAT IS IT YOU'RE IMPLYING, ARTHUR?

NO IMPLICATIONS, NORMAN. I WAS JUST WONDERING WHAT TYPE OF WORK VAN ADDER DID FOR THE COMPANY.

LET ME MAKE SOMETHING ***CLEAR,*** ARTHUR. OSBORN INDUSTRIES IS ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S LEADERS IN SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH.

WE'RE ENGAGED IN DOZENS OF PROJECTS, THE MAJORITY OF WHICH, ARE FAR ABOVE ANY LEVEL OF SCIENTIFIC COMPREHENSION YOU MIGHT HAVE.

EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT.

WHAT'S YOUR NAME, SON?

PETER, SIR. PETER PARKER.

IT DOES MY HEART GOOD TO SEE A YOUNG BOY LIKE YOU HERE. I HAVE A BOY JUST ABOUT YOUR AGE. I WISH ***HE*** WAS INTERESTED IN THE SCIENCES.

A LOT OF KIDS JUST DON'T GET IT, SIR.

NOT LIKE WE ***VISIONARIES***, EH, PETER?

NO SIR.

AND WHO DID YOU BRING WITH YOU TODAY, PETER?

MY AUNT MAY AND UNCLE BEN, SIR.

YOU HAVE A BRIGHT YOUNG MAN HERE, FOLKS. YOU BRING HIM UP TO OSBORN INDUSTRIES FOR A TOUR OF THE BIO-RESEARCH LAB.

I LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU IN THE FUTURE, PETER. I HAVE A FEELING YOU AND I ARE EITHER GOING TO BE VERY GOOD FRIENDS, OR...

...FIERCE COMPETITORS.

THAT IS WHAT OSBORN INDUSTRIES IS ALL ABOUT, ARTHUR.

I AM WELL AWARE OF YOUR PROCLIVITY TOWARD THINGS CONSPIRATORIAL, ARTHUR, BUT...

...YOU ARE ***WAY*** OFF BASE ON THIS ONE.

THIS DISCUSSION IS OVER.

I SUGGEST, IF YOU'RE UNHAPPY WITH YOUR EMPLOYMENT, AT OSBORN INDUSTRIES...

...YOU MOVE ON.

LATER THAT EVENING, ARTHUR STACY SEEKS SOLACE IN THE BOTTOM OF A LIQUOR GLASS...

Bar

ARTHUR... NANCY IS WORRIED SICK ABOUT YOU. YOU DIDN'T CALL --

SO SHE SENT OUT BIG BROTHER GEORGE TO FIND ME.

LOOK, I HEARD WHAT HAPPENED. WHAT WERE YOU THINKING? ACCUSING A MAN LIKE NORMAN OSBORN OF --

HE ***KNOWS*** SOMETHING, GEORGE. I CAN ***FEEL*** IT IN MY BONES.

THIS IS JUST LIKE YOU. EVEN WHEN YOU WERE IN THE ARMY YOU WERE MORE INTERESTED IN YOUR CAREER THAN DOING THE RIGHT THING.

YOU MAKE ME SO MAD, I WANT TO --

FWAP

YOU DON'T WANT THIS, ARTHUR... AND NEITHER DO I.

OH... I'VE WANTED THIS FOR A ***LONG*** TIME!

THE TWO A YOUSE TAKE IT OUTSIDE OR I'M CALLING THE COPS --

-- WHENEVER YOU'RE DONE, OFFICER.

I'M DONE ***NOW.***

THE PRIVATE LABORATORY WHICH ONCE BELONGED TO NORMAN OSBORN'S PARTNER, DR. MENDEL STROMM...

AH... I DO SO *LOVE* THIS VIEW.

AND TO THINK, SOME DAY, ALL THAT OUT THERE...

...WILL *ALL* BE MINE!

STROMM WAS A GENIUS AND YET HE WAS CARELESS ENOUGH TO ALLOW ME TO FRAME HIM FOR EMBEZZLEMENT AND TO SEIZE CONTROL OF ALL HIS INVENTIONS.

HERE I STAND, HAVING BARELY SCRATCHED THE SURFACE OF ALL THAT WAS STROMM'S.

HIS NOTES ARE UN-DECIPHERABLEIN THEIR CURRENT STATE. THE LAST PROJECT HE WAS WORKING ON REMAINS A MYSTERY TO ME.

I'VE TORN THIS LABORATORY APART LOOKING FOR HIS NOTES AND I STILL CANNOT FIND THEM.

MY OWN EXPERIMENTS HAVE BEEN TANTAMOUNT TO FAILURE COMPARED TO HIS.

AND NOW THIS ENTIRE VAN ADDER MESS!

IT'S NOT *ACCEPTABLE!*

IT MUST ALL BE MINE! STROMM'S SECRETS *MUST BE MINE!*

WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME, NORMAN?

NELS, HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE? NO ONE --

NO ONE ELSE ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO BE YOUR GUINEA PIG, NORMAN.

WHAT IS *HAPPENING* TO ME?

I CAN'T GO HOME TO MY WIFE, CAN'T EVEN LOOK IN A MIRROR.

AND THE THINGS I'VE DONE -- ALL THOSE PEOPLE I'VE KILLED. I DIDN'T WANT TO, NORMAN! I HAD NO CONTROL!

YOU HAVE TURNED MY LIFE INTO A NIGHT-MARE, NORMAN.

NOW, NOW, NELS, WE'LL SET EVERY-THING RIGHT.

AND YOU CANNOT HOLD *ME* SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS UNFORTUNATE SIDE EFFECT.

UNFORTUNATE SIDE EFFECT?

LOOK AT ME, NORMAN!

I AM BARELY *HUMAN* ANY-MORE!

I AM --

YEARGH!

HMMM. THE TRANS-MUTATIONS SEEM TO BE PROGRESSING MORE QUICKLY THAN ANTICIPATED.

NOW, I'LL REMIND YOU THAT *YOU* VOLUNTEERED TO HELP ME WITH EXPERIMENTING BEFORE WE HAD A STABILIZING REAGENT.

BUT THAT'S NEITHER HERE NOR THERE.

THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT WE OBTAIN ANSWERS...

...NO MATTER WHAT THE RISKS.

A SHORT TIME LATER IN NORMAN OSBORN'S PRIVATE OFFICE SUITE...

THE ANSWERS HAVE GOT TO BE HERE SOMEWHERE.

WHAT ARE YOU HIDING, NORMAN OSBORN?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

THIS IS IT.

NELS VAN ADDER. RESEARCH ASSISTANT TO NORMAN OSBORN ON BIOGENETIC PROJECT SUPREME.

THERE IS NO TERMINATION NOTICE HERE. VAN ADDER IS STILL DRAWING A PAYCHECK FROM OSBORN INDUSTRIES. HE --

I TAKE IT THAT THIS IS YOUR WAY OF HANDING IN YOUR RESIGNATION NOTICE, ARTHUR?

CLICK

WHAT WOULD YOUR BROTHER THINK IF I WERE TO CALL HIM NOW?

TRULY A STAIN ON THE STACY GOOD NAME.

NO. IT IS NOT.

THIS ISN'T OVER, OSBORN.

ARTHUR STACY RETURNS TO HIS HOME. THE EVENING'S EVENTS WEIGH HEAVILY UPON HIS SHOULDERS.

PLEASE, ARTHUR. COME TO BED.

LOSING THIS JOB ISN'T THE END OF THE WORLD.

AS NICE AS THE SALARY IS, YOU WERE NEVER CUT OUT TO BE A SECURITY GUARD.

YOU'RE NOT YOUR BROTHER AND I WOULDN'T EXPECT YOU TO BE.

YOU HAD THAT OFFER IN ENGLAND. WE CAN START ALL OVER. IT WILL ALL BE FINE... I PROMISE.

THANKS, NANCY. I LOVE YOU.

NOW GO UP TO BED. I'LL BE UP IN A MINUTE.

NORMAN IS DIRTY.

I JUST DON'T HAVE ENOUGH EVIDENCE YET.

MAYBE IF I CALLED GEORGE... TRIED TO REASON WITH HIM...

...WHO AM I KIDDING?

HE'D NEVER --

SCREEE

HUH? A CAR HEADING THIS WAY?

NANCY!

BUDDA BUDDA

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

GET DOWN!

BUDDA BUDDA

NANCY! ARE YOU OKAY?

I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT. YOU GET JILL AND PAUL READY. I'M CALLING GEORGE. HE'LL HAVE A SQUAD CAR OVER HERE TO TAKE YOU SOMEPLACE SAFE.

I-I'M OKAY... I TH-THINK! WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARTHUR? WHO DID THIS?

GEORGE, IT'S ARTHUR.

I'M TAKING NORMAN OSBORN DOWN TONIGHT.

BUDDA BUDDA

DO **NOT** GET IN MY WAY.

A SHORT TIME LATER AT OSBORN INDUSTRIES ARTHUR STACY SEEKS A RELEASE FOR THE RAGE WHICH IS BOILING INSIDE OF HIM.

AND HE FINDS IT IN A LOADED GUN.

PTOOH

PTOOH

THAT'LL TEACH HIM TO CHANGE THE LOCKS ON *ME*.

HMMM? WHERE ARE ALL THE SECURITY PEOPLE? I TRAINED THEM ALL BETTER THAN THIS.

THEY SHOULD BE ALL OVER ME BY NOW. I SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN ABLE TO COME THIS FAR --

FREEZE!

NOW *THAT* VOICE SOUNDS FAMILIAR.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, ART?

I KNOW YOU'RE UPSET ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT, BUT IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH NORMAN OSBORN.

WE CAPTURED THE KIDS RESPONSIBLE. IT WAS GANG RELATED. A DRIVE-BY SHOOTING. THEY HAD THE WRONG ADDRESS.

HE SET IT UP, GEORGE.
I'M GOING TO TAKE HIM DOWN.
WILL YOU LISTEN TO YOURSELF, ART?
CAN'T YOU HEAR JUST HOW PARANOID YOU SOUND?
HE'S DIRTY, GEORGE.
OH, YEAH, HE'D HAVE TO BE. YOU CAN NEVER TRUST A MAN WHO BUILDS ORPHANAGES, CONTRIBUTES TO CHARITIES AND DOES AS MUCH FOR THE COMMUNITY AS SOMEONE WHO IS AS DESPICABLE AS NORMAN OSBORN.
HE HAS YOU FOOLED JUST LIKE ALL THE OTHERS.
YES, ME, THE CHIEF OF POLICE, THE MAYOR, THE GOVERNOR... HECK, HE'S EVEN GOT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES FOOLED, ART.
COME ON! WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT UFO'S OR SOME MYSTERIOUS CABAL BEHIND THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION HERE. THIS IS REAL LIFE!
IT'S TIME TO STOP CHASING SHADOWS.
NORMAN OSBORN IS A GOOD MAN. I KNOW HIM. I'VE HAD HIM TO MY HOUSE FOR DINNER. HE'S NOT SOME WILD-EYED MADMAN -- NOT SOME MONSTER!
HE GAVE YOU A JOB... WHEN NO ONE ELSE WOULD. HE DID IT AS A FAVOR TO ME.
THANKS, BIG BROTHER. YOU BAILED ME OUT ONCE AGAIN.
DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO WITHOUT YOU --
ARRRRRGH!
WHAT THE --
YOU CAN FOLLOW ME IF YOU WANT, GEORGE, ME..?
...I'M CHASING SOME SHADOWS!

MOMENTS LATER, THE STACY BROTHERS BURST IN ON A SCENE WHICH WILL HAUNT THEIR NIGHTMARES FOR YEARS TO COME.

YOUR TIMING IS IMPECCABLE, GEORGE.

PLEASE SUBDUE THIS CREATURE BEFORE SOMEONE IS HURT.

SUBDUE ME?

YOU ARE A COOL ONE, NORMAN! I'LL GIVE YOU *THAT!*

AND YOU WILL BE EVEN *COOLER* ONCE YOU ARE *DEAD!*

ANY TIME NOW, CAPTAIN STACY!

ARTHUR... YOU ARE BACK ON THE PAYROLL AT TWICE YOUR PREVIOUS SALARY.

AND A SUBSTANTIAL BONUS ONCE YOU SUBDUE THIS THING.

YOU CANNOT BUY YOUR WAY OUT OF ***THIS*** ONE, NORMAN! IT'S TIME FOR ***ALL*** OLD DEBTS TO BE SETTLED!

ART! GET NORMAN TO SAFETY!

I'LL SLOW THIS... THIS... ***THING***... DOWN WHILE --

FWAK

MIND YOUR OWN ***BUSINESS!***

ARGH!

KRAK

MY LEG, ART... IT'S BROKEN! YOU'VE GOT TO STOP THAT THING... GOT TO HELP NORMAN.

NO, GEORGE, I DO ***NOT*** HAVE TO.

HE IS UNDOUBTEDLY GETTING WHAT HE DESERVES.

THERE IS SOMETHING EVIL LURKING BEHIND THE SLICK FACADE NORMAN OSBORN PRESENTS TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.

I KNOW IT'S THERE.

BUT WHAT IF IT'S ***NOT?***

WHAT IF YOU ARE WRONG... AGAIN... ARTHUR? WHAT IF NORMAN IS EXACTLY AS HE APPEARS TO BE?

AND WHAT IF YOU LET HIM BE KILLED? COULD YOU LIVE WITH THAT?

COULD YOU LIVE WITH YOUR-SELF?

THIS IS WHAT I'VE ALWAYS HATED ABOUT YOU, GEORGE...

...YOU ARE ***ALWAYS*** RIGHT!

PTOOM PTOOM

PTOOM

ARRRGH!

WELL, WE'VE SUCCEEDED IN MAKING HIM EVEN ***MORE*** ANGRY. NOW I'M OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS, GEORGE.

THERE ***WAS*** A TIME WHEN YOU AND I OPERATED PRETTY WELL AS A TEAM.

I SAY WE GO BACK TO THE DAYS OF FOOTBALL IN OLD MAN GALLAGHER'S LOT.

I'LL HIT HIM HIGH.

YOU HIT HIM LOW.

OOLPH!

KASH

THE ***RIVER.***

I'LL GET A PATROL BOAT TO START DRAGGING FOR HIS BODY.

A SHORT TIME LATER...

NELS VAN ADDER WAS A FORMER RESEARCHER FOR MY FORMER PARTNER, MENDEL STROMM.

I HAD UNCOVERED THAT NELS WAS EXPERIMENTING WITH SOME BIOTECHNOLOGY DEVELOPED BY STROMM. THE RESULTS WERE WHAT WE SAW TONIGHT.

NELS WAS ONCE A GOOD MAN. I WANTED TO HELP HIM. IN RETROSPECT, THAT WAS A MISTAKE.

OSBORN INDUSTRIES WILL MAKE COMPLETE RESTITUTION FOR ANY PROPERTY DAMAGE OUTSIDE THE FACILITIES.

GEORGE, I OWE YOU MY LIFE. THANK YOU.

ARTHUR...

I TRIED, GEORGE, I REALLY DID.

I KNOW, NORMAN. AND THANK YOU.

AFTER GEORGE IS TAKEN AWAY IN AN AMBULANCE, NORMAN MAKES A STARTLING DISCOVERY IN THE SHATTERED REMAINS OF MENDEL STROMM'S DESK.

WHAT'S THIS? STROMM'S NOTES! HIDDEN WITHIN THE STRUCTURE OF THE DESK ITSELF!

I WILL TAKE THEM TO MY HOME LAB. HIS SECRETS WILL BE ***MINE!***

AND THAT, TRUE BELIEVERS, IS ALL PART OF THE TANGLED WEB WHICH HAS ENTWINED SPIDER-MAN IN THE PAST AND...

...WILL AGAIN ENSNARE HIM IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.

AND TILL THAT HALCYON MOMENT, WHEREVER YOU GO, WHATEVER YOU DO -- THINK MARVEL!

'CAUSE WE'RE ALWAYS THINKING OF ***YOU!***

EXCELSIOR!

END

MARVEL COLLECTED EDITIONS

Spider-Man: The Lost Hunt
ISBN 978-1-302-94807-8

AVAILABLE IN PRINT OR DIGITAL WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD!

MARVEL COLLECTED EDITIONS

Ben Reilly: Spider-Man
ISBN 978-1-302-93218-3

AVAILABLE IN PRINT OR DIGITAL WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD!

KAMIC RIDER
MARIKA